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THIS IS A CHRONOLOGICAL COMPILATION OF ALBUM REVIEWS+NEWS UPDATES+CHOCOLATE GRINDER PIECES+ALBUM OF THE YEAR LISTS REGARDING HYPE WILLIAMS/DEAN BLUNT FROM THE WEBSITE TINYMIXTAPES.COM

From the compiler:

I began reading TMT in late 2013 and had a lot of fun following the latest news and reviews of Dean Blunt, who I grew to appreciate greatly, from writers like MR P, C MONSTER, SQUEO, and others. I put this together to archive their coverage of Dean Blunt's career throughout the 2010s.

A couple disclaimers:

The compilation is not exhaustive, a few pieces were left out. Articles about Inga's post-Hype Williams work were left out. Wanted to keep it focused on Dean Blunt – but if you're a fan of Inga, I encourage you to check out tinymixtapes.com to read their coverage of her music.
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The articles often contained many embedded images and videos which have mostly been left out. I tried to give context as needed for dead links (a common theme with Dean Blunt).

Enjoy ~~~~~~

2011

Hype Williams' Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland release solo recordings rarer than most breeds of unicorn

News

by LIZ LOUCHE · October 11, 2011

Hey, college freshmen! *Ding dong ding dong!* What's that noise? Oh yes. It's 2 o'clock today, [INSERT DATE HERE], which means it's time for your first Economics quiz of the semester! Didn't study? Don't worry: it's multiple choice, and for the purposes of this article, it's only one question that really has nothing to do with Economics anyway.

Which of the following statements is true?

(a) Scarcity increases demand.

(b) The US economy, in its current state, is fucked.

(c) A band is mysterious. If said band members do not reveal their faces and/or names, the band's mysteriousity can be directly linked to the band's likelihood of releasing awesomely-named records.

(d) All of the above.

Nice work. Obviously the answer is (d) all of the above. Take, for example, Hype Williams, the band (not the director), which consists of two hazy like-minded individuals, Inga Copeland and Dean Blunt. This year Kode9's Hyperdub label (also home to Burial, The Bug, and many more) released the group's four-song debut, *Kelly Price W8 Gain Vol.II.* This summer, Copeland got a little help releasing her self-titled solo joint through Rush Hour, the fantastic Amsterdam house label. It's available online. Now the man half of Hype Williams has his own solo thang available for your consumption.

Introducing Dean Blunt's *Jill Scott Herring OST*! It's a cassette. It's a cassette release limited to 100 copies. It's a cassette release limited to 100 copies through Mo Wax/Honest Jon's artist Will Bankhead's Trilogy Tapes label *that's already sold out*! A mere 100? Scarcity. DEMAND. Did I

mention it's already sold out? When the economy crashes once and for all, friends, limited cassette tape releases will be the new gold standard.

2011 Favorite Music Releases

25. Hype Williams
One Nation
[Hippos in Tanks]
By REED SCOTT REID

Have you ever had a really bad time at a rave? Hype Williams clearly have, and with One Nation, they returned the disavowed puking, jabbering, jangling confusion of the raved body to something like integrity with a great ethereal smack of downtempo downheartedness. It's as if the mind-dulling escapism of cosmic disco's eclecticism has been excised, leaving behind an (an)aesthetic of weird, body-oriented juxtapositions. Just two examples: "Mitsubishi" — a blunted 4/4 saga in muddy slo-mo — and the dubby darkwave of "Your Girl Smells Chung When She Wears Dior," both exhibiting a poise only hinted at in the scrappy experimentalism of previous works. The narcotic drift of this bag of box jams further blurred the line between subversion and reverie, in an anti-social, anti-realist Balearica of codeine and early nights that staged an unsettling psychedelic meditation on rave's death wish — on its flirtation with limit states, blank exhaustion, and brain damage. Il faut imaginer Sisyphe heureux — these smudgewave sorcerers spent the year laughing in the dark, pushing at the boundaries of the impossible: the better, it seemed, to mockingly dissect the possible. An oily nugget of shit buried beneath layers of precious stones, this was an overdose of ecstasy at the back of a rave bunker — a trembling panic of beat-tape haze.

2012

Dean Blunt of Hype Williams leaks goth R&B LP *The Narcissist II*

News
by LIZ LOUCHE · February 20, 2012

Sure, David Lynch is already making electronic music under his own name, but a listen to the new Dean Blunt LP could certainly fool one into thinking the duo's ghostly brand of 3 AM R&B shot straight outta the auteur's brain and into the grooves of a long-forgotten private press soul record. Hyperdub confirmed that Blunt, the male half of Hype Williams, leaked a new solo record(/mixtape?) called The Narcissist II on Sunday. The female half of Hype Williams, Inga Copeland, is featured toward the end of the free recording.

If The Weeknd delves lyrically into the scary side of the late night lifestyle, *The Narcissist II* is like the soundtrack to a horror film. It's like *INLAND EMPIRE* through a funk filter: both beautiful and terrifying. Full of samples, cell phone vibrations, and enough atmospherics to make you take a baseball bat to bed, the LP likely won't be around online for free for long (download here).

Meanwhile, Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland have a new LP coming out April 17 through Hyperdub called Black Is Beautiful (FYI: it is not under the Hype Williams moniker), and if it's anything like this one, fans will be scrambling to get it. Or get away from it. The tracklisting for Black Is Beautiful is listed below:

01. Venice Dreamway
02. 2
03. 3
04. 4
05. 5
06. 6
07. 7
08. 8
09. 9
10. 10
11. 11
12. 12
13. 13
14. 14
15. 15

~~~~~ ALBUM REVIEW ~~~~

Dean Blunt

The Narcissist II

[Self-Released; 2012]

by MR P

STYLES: drift

OTHERS: Julee Cruise, Sade, Inga Copeland, Hype Williams

Hype Williams' music roams, meanders, drifts. The group's members, Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland, bury their stories so deep that listening is like a mindfuck in slow motion. It's a seductive, intoxicating blend of warped R&B, narcotic dub, broken drone, and comatose hip-hop, but their music signifies nothing/everything so confusingly that it unhinges itself from stylistic barriers, swims down your throat, and infects your body like a virus. The state they put you in isn't one of hypnagogia or mysticism, but of bodily awareness: in its refusal to commit itself both aesthetically and conceptually, the music has no option but to root itself in the flesh, sweaty and foul-smelling, swishing and swaying away from the clinks and clanks of magic and rainbows. It's music for the beheaded body, for the transient flesh-state, for the ever-shifting in-between.

If Hype Williams' music fetishizes the drift in the context of the body, then The Narcissist II, a self-released solo mixtape by Blunt (stream here, download here), acts as a particularly noteworthy foil. For all the evasive dodge-balling — reflected also in their shrouded identities and multiple truth-tellings (Who exactly are Roy Nnawuchi, Karen Glass, Denna Glass, Bo Khat Eternal Troof Family Band, and Paradise Sisters?) — the moments of what one might call 'song' are framed by a story about abuse and infidelity told through scattered audio clips. Paranoia. Suspense. Rage. Violence. It's all narcissistic stuff. But tethering the floating, impotent sounds of unstable synths, chink'd rhythms, and brilliant off-tune karaoke-ing (courtesy of Dean, except for a Julee Cruise-sampled track that features Copeland) to

such a clear narrative encourages a functional reading: a hierarchy in sound materializes, where the tension-creating becomes complementary rather than an end unto itself. The result is a sort of dragging panic, a grotesque scrawl of 'deconstructed' R&B whose impact is muddied with just the right amount of commentary and absurdism.

To be sure, the drift is still clearly heard — songs fade in and out, moods blend unsettlingly, rhythms overlap — but contrary to a lot of sampled music, many of which depend on the structuring of loops to convey a defined trajectory, the insertion of the narrative clips here sounds like a violation. Not in the context of aesthetic flow, but in the context of more transient properties, like trying to anchor something that would otherwise float away. The difference is more easily heard/felt when comparing The Narcissist II to its original CD-R incarnation from late 2011, which showcased many of the songs/moments that appear on part two, but without the audio clips. In this context, these already poorly-lit songs sound even more sketch-like and stitched-together, adapting sloppily to the context in which they're presented. It's a tension that's made even clearer when re-listening to some of the tracks in their detached YouTube origins or by comparing II's opening drone to its recontextualized form on Blunt and Copeland's upcoming Black Is Beautiful release on Hyperdub.
All of which is to say that the drift on The Narcissist II is perhaps about movement above all else, exemplified not only in the rhythms, but also in Blunt's revisionist, cut-and-paste approach to music-making/-distribution (a slipstream methodology that deadens the impact of reviews like this one, which is decidedly after-the-fact and beside-the-point). Blunt has proven himself to be a master participant in this aesthetic float-game, and The Narcissist II is his demented billet-doux to the gratification that continues to elude.

♫♪ Dean Blunt & Inga Copeland - Black Is Beautiful [trailer]

WATCH

by MR P · March 15, 2012

Celebrity superstars/fashion icons Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland (also sometimes known as Hype Williams) are set to release Black Is Beautiful, an exhilarating 15-track album of their fuzzy brand of surreal, trash-humping pop. It's really fucking great. Check out the album's trailer above, which (as Clash points out) features audio from a WWE advertising campaign. Sounds about right.

Look for Black Is Beautiful April 16 on Hyperdub. And while you wait, don't forget about Blunt's latest mixtape and please do yourself a favor and put Donnie & Joe Emerson's "Baby" on repeat. You'll thank us later.

♫♪ cplnd - “Butters and u know it”

LISTEN

by MR P · March 19, 2012

We know “Butters and u know it” *isn’t* off Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland’s forthcoming Hyperdub album Black Is Beautiful, but beyond that, we don’t really know that much about the track. It was posted yesterday by SoundCloud user cplnd with the note, “copeland banana nokia re-edits,dubplate, 2011,” which probably means that, yes, it’s a Copeland track. But who the hell knows for sure. This is all probably not intended to be mysterious, but tracking down “truths” about Blunt and Copeland is a fool’s errand anyway and often results in these silly posts. It’s a consequence of trying to know, I guess. (I blame the enlightenment/society/culture/anything but me.)
Sometimes it’s best to just say fuck it and listen:
[dead link]

Dean Blunt & Inga Copeland share 30 unreleased tracks for free download, achieve maximum choong

News

by SQUEO · April 5, 2012

Dean Blunt & Inga Copeland’s *Black Is Beautiful* is almost here (due April 17 via Hyperdub), and as a “fucking awesome” reminder, they’ve just let loose another heaping handful of tracks under the name *The Attitude Era*. The mixtape/unorganized jumble is being offered for free download here (originally posted at the end of this interesting Hype Williams profile at *The Guardian*), but get it now because the link will be dead in two weeks.

Though a mishmash, *The Attitude Era* clocks in at 33 tracks and nearly 1.5 hours; *damn*. Plus, you never know with these two whether an untitled track might be the highlight of the album, so no sniffing at these titles just because they say “version” or “unmastered” or “rejected remix.” Inhale, exhale.
The Attitude Era “tracklisting”:

tape 3 mix weds
Showcase of the Immortals ramirez mix instrumental
AMIR voc mix
attitude adjustment
The Attitude Era
bar rumba
Sinn Fein
slugabed rejected remix
This is the remix

untitled
WHITE FLIGHT
WHITE FLIGHT II
white flight refix
y2j
8210
copeland not ever
face turn MASTERED
Schadenfreude
PROGRESSION
poison dub unmasterd
Parred
Millenial Turk
THE MANDIBLE CLAW
Judgement
Jericho
heel turn vocal version
LUNA VACHON
Existential flux
Energy God
copeland rumors unmastered
untitled
blinder
The Sniper

~~~~~ ALBUM REVIEW ~~~~~

Dean Blunt And Inga Copeland

by JONATHAN DEAN

Black Is Beautiful

[Hyperdub; 2012]

Styles: mogadon rap, lo-fi eurovision, post-bass
Others: Hype Williams, James Ferraro, Balam Acab, KWJAZ

For those who have followed the inscrutable trajectory of the duo known as Hype Williams since their early releases on De Stijl, it may be tempting to view *Black Is Beautiful* as a breakthrough of some sort. For the first time, the album bears the names Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland rather than Hype Williams, presumably a preemptive strategy to avoid litigation by the still very much in demand hip-hop video director. The album also carries the imprimatur of Hyperdub, the London label responsible for breaking highly-acclaimed electronic acts Burial and Zomby. Unlike past releases with po-mo trash culture titles like *Kelly Price W8 Gain Vol. II* (there was no volume one), the new album title is a famous slogan of the Black Consciousness Movement, popularized to counter internalized racism and

hegemonic (white) standards of beauty. The oft reticent duo even granted a rare interview to *The Guardian* in which they seem to back away ever so slightly from the cagey fictions spun in their press releases. Yes, one could be forgiven for thinking of this album as an unambiguous step out of the opium fog of mystification that previously enveloped the duo and their weird, post-internet brand of indeterminate drift. But there are a few problems with that narrative.

For one, Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland aren't real names. In fact, Hype Williams is a more honest name; no one is going to mistake the duo for a famous video director. Blunt and Copeland, on the other hand, is a double deception. For another, the album cover is a rather obvious appropriation of the iconic Ebony magazine logo. For a group that is only half black and seems largely uninterested in making any clear, declarative statements about race with its music, *Black Is Beautiful* begins to seem like a curiously ersatz title, a radical motto emptied of revolutionary content, reduced to the same meaningless cultural void as the duo's (sorta) debut *Find Out What Happens When People Stop Being Polite, And Start Gettin' Reel*. As on past outings, Blunt and Copeland get esoteric with song titles, naming the opening track ("Venice Dreamway") and leaving the other 14 untitled. As always, the duo excels at setting out a trail of breadcrumbs that leads nowhere. But the best evidence of Hype's recalcitrance, their refusal to go any way towards the demystification of their project, is the music itself.

Black Is Beautiful is a series of beguiling paradoxes, directionless improvs that are not directionless and could not possibly have been improvised. A meditation on race that is neither meditative nor about race. It is the most definitive statement by the duo, but it is an album that by its very nature seems to mock the idea of definitive statements. Taken together, the strategies employed by Blunt and Copeland could be termed *occultation*, the process of "making hidden," the willful foreclosure of meaning and intent. This strategy is neatly demonstrated by recent live shows by the duo, in which they appear hidden behind a curtain or completely cloaked in fog. This isn't merely restraint or a vulgar attempt at myth-making, but rather a conceptual locus. The opposite of Hype is secrecy, but they are two sides of the same coin. Blunt and Copeland reveal everything other than anything one would need to complete the puzzle. You can't even be sure there is a puzzle. In an age of internet oversharing and information binges, this is one of the only logical strategies available. Musically, they proffer hauntingly beautiful melodies, moments that beg to be fleshed out, extended, given structure. However, it becomes clear that these moments would lose their intrigue if they were massaged and worked into fully-fledged pop songs. The spell would be broken.

The Hype Williams spell is not merely the product of *patina*, the analog hum of a dusty Fostex 4-track, the drone of a cheap keyboard drifting out of tune. These have become familiar elements in indie/underground music these days and are insufficient to explain the alchemy at work here. Key to Blunt and Copeland's occulting process is a refractory approach to genre. "Venice Dreamway" opens with a frenetic live drum improvisation, which would seem to signal a transition toward organic instrumentation, the incorporation of jazz elements, which is a familiar trajectory (see Mouse On Mars, Flying Lotus, etc.). This turns out to be a red herring, however, and subsequent tracks return to the standard arsenal of drum machines, samples, and synths. "12" is a nod in the direction of

juke/footwork, but Copeland's weird vocal floats unnaturally over the rhythm and cancels out any chance of dancing utility. "5" sounds like a demo tape of Estonia's entry for the 2013 Eurovision Song Contest. "9" is the album's centerpiece in many respects, an abstracted, desolated iteration of UK hip-hop that opens with the pitched-down mantra "Never look back," then proceeds to ignore its own advice, transforming into an instantly nostalgic synthpop number. "10" is an unrehearsed, one-take dub jam, complete with sirens, barely-controlled squalls of feedback, and shout-outs to Jah. "2" is a fairly straightforward cover of a ridiculously obscure vanity-press R&B ballad. It all adds up to everything and nothing. No matter how many hyphens and modifiers you use, it is impossible to sum up the stylistic approach of Blunt and Copeland, and yet the album is not "eclectic" and nothing sounds incongruous.

The album is marked by repetition and self-appropriation. "3," "7," and "14" are all versions of the same dissonant, aimless instrumental. "9" is a partial recapitulation of the untitled second track on last year's *S.E.A.L. III* EP, just as elements from Dean Blunt's strange "mixtape" *The Narcissist II* reappear on this album, notably the opening drone on "Venice Dreamway." Repeating, recycling, recontextualizing, appropriating; these are common methods for contemporary art, but Blunt and Copeland conceal the guideposts that would allow us to locate a thread of continuity, a symbolic system that would permit access to specificity. What they provide instead is sensation, whether through hauntingly familiar melodies, the accretion of sonic detail, or the sub-bass frequencies that rumble beneath many of the most arresting moments on the album. But this sensation is not "pure" or abstract; it is deeply and inexorably tied to a sense of history, memory, failure, and melancholy. This is the sensation described by Walter Benjamin in relation to the allegorical text, in which "the observer is confronted with the *facies hippocratica* of history as a petrified, primordial landscape… Allegories are, in the realm of thoughts, what ruins are in the realm of things." This is the same phenomenon described by Craig Owens in relation to postmodern art, in which the work of art becomes an allegory for its own illegibility, for the failure of meaning itself. In this sense, the "black" of the title is not racial blackness, but the blackness of the void, the "abyss" of occultism. And that void, evoked by the dark, inchoate pop of Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland, is indeed beautiful.

♫♪ Dean Blunt And Inga Copeland - "The Narcissist" [Inga Copeland feat. Snyper remix]

LISTEN

by MR P · May 29, 2012

After the release last month of their stunning Black Is Beautiful (TMT Review), Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland are back with new music, this time a supposed remix. It's a fascinating song, all sketch-like and stitched-together in a vein somewhat similar to Dean Blunt's The Narcissist II mixtape, but with a definite Copeland vibe heard in the cut-up-ed-ness and, of course, her vocals that function here to construct something like a "chorus." Don't know exactly which song is being remixed here, despite the YouTube's title sorta referencing the aforementioned mixtape, but it sounds like a rapper named Snyper

(who may or may not have anything to do with the song “The Sniper” from The Attitude Era) has been invited to play in Hype(rreal) Williams’ increasingly fascinating (and incestuous) playhouse.

♫♪ Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland - “5th horseman”

LISTEN

by SQUEO · June 11, 2012

Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland really connect with all the audiophiles out there who only accept FLACs marked with proper ID3 tags. Because in the end, will there really be enough time to listen to all the music we’ve stolen in the last five years? It only makes practical sense in 2012 to focus on the data cataloging and curation; the music itself is best suited for stress-testing your subwoofer, or the quality of the low end on a new pair of Sennheiser HD-25 headphones. It’s comforting when the climax of a song plays through with zero clipping. We’re all safe after all. ~~So go ahead and test your hardware on the new Blunt/Copeland track “5th horseman” below, though please remember to “watch full screen at 720p HD,” as requested.~~

Now when is *The Narcissist II* (TMT Review) going to get released on peppermint swirl vinyl with B-side etching and tip-on Stoughton gatefold sleeve with mastering by Rashad Becker of Dubplates & Mastering? That would sound incredible once uploaded to What.CD with 100% log.

[Update: Like the last track we wrote about, “5th horseman” is gone from YouTube already. Fuckers. Here’s another one that went up yesterday and is still there… the fourth in the “Stalker” series.]

♫♪ Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland - “Stalker 5, NJ, 2012”

WATCH

by MR P · June 25, 2012

The last two (1, 2) blurbs we posted about Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland were of (I think) fantastic tracks that I can now barely (half-)remember (hypnagogically, etc.), since the duo almost immediately took them down after posting. In fact, it happened earlier this year too with a track posted on SoundCloud.

But as much as we seem to be stalking Blunt and Copeland, perhaps they have been watching us all along. Yesterday, the duo posted the fifth installment in their "Stalker" series, and it's the longest of the bunch. While the first several videos — each of which feature the same song — seemed to set the scene with static shots (the first of Copeland, the second of Blunt, the third of Blunt and a gun, and the fourth of an unknown cityscape), the latest stalker video reveals not only the time (2012) and place (New Jersey) of the story, but also the stalkee, who is apparently chilling on the rooftop above a convenience store next to a fair ride.

But what I wonder is: Does Blunt still have that gun?

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "Flaxen"

LISTEN

by MR P · June 27, 2012

There's a certain degree of guesswork involved with every new track from Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland (known live, nowadays, as Hype Williams). Last time around, I made up some bullshit narrative about their "Stalker" videos, but this time I've actually done my homework! What we know for sure is that the track in question, "Flaxen," comes from The Narcissist III, presumably a forthcoming follow-up to Blunt's brilliant The Narcissist II solo mixtape released earlier this year. We also know that it's indeed Blunt on harp, as he played the instrument for nearly five years at the Jacobs School of Music of Indiana University. And on the vocals? Yep, it's Inga Copeland, who studied voice at the Conservatoire de Paris. Because of these facts, we also know that we can safely call this High Art.

Get cultured here:
• Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland: http://youtube.com/pollyjacobsen

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "Palace Pavillion"

LISTEN

by MR P · August 8, 2012

Like The Quietus, we've been getting emails too from Denna Glass (♥), the superstar celebrity, media-whore representative of Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland. Last time we got one, we were treated to "Flaxen," a harp-laden track from Dean Blunt's forthcoming The Narcissist III mixtape, a follow-up to part II. This time, we were pointed to a short little number called "Palace Pavillion," which sees Blunt — eyes closed, chin pointed toward the sky, biting lower lip — playing piano, overdubbed with Blunt — eyes wide open, slight grimace on face, swaying ominously — on drums and horns.
Listen here:

[dead link]

Meanwhile, don't forget to pick up Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland's Black Is Beautiful, and keep an eye out for those stalker vids!

Hype Williams' Dean Blunt reissues *The Narcissist II* mixtape on Hippos in Tanks

News

by LIZ LOUCHE · October 18, 2012

Back in February, Hype Williams genius Dean Blunt released a mixtape called *The Narcissist II*, a sort of precursor to Dean Blunt and Inga Copelands' Hyperdub LP *Black Is Beautiful*. The 30-minute downloadable mixtape sounded like a travelogue of all the states of late-night urban ennui, as narrated by a laudanum-addicted Barry White trapped in a Victrola. Plus, it had Inga, the other half of Hype Williams, providing soporific and seductive vocals on the title track. It was a mini-masterpiece, now lost to the magical tides of the internet.

But no longer! The good people over at Hippos in Tanks/World Music have decided to give this thing a proper coming-out party and send it off into the world in all its remixed and remastered glory come November 26. You can get this thing as a digital download or as a limited-edition vinyl dealie. And stay tuned, because word on the street is that *The Narcissist III* is in the works!

• Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland: http://youtube.com/pollyjacobsen
• Hippos In Tanks: http://hipposintanks.net

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "Need 2 Let U Go" / "And I'll Show You Heaven If U Let Me"

LISTEN

by MR P · October 29, 2012

In true Dean Blunt fashion, "And I'll Show You Heaven If U Let Me" has already been taken down and replaced with a weird little number called "Need 2 Let U Go," which features fragmented piano, floundering trumpet, and out-of-tune vocals. Listen here while you can:

[dead link]

Fresh off the reissue announcement of *The Narcissist II*, an excellent mixtape (TMT Review) released earlier this year by Dean Blunt (Hype Williams, Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland), comes a new track that's a bit less ominous, less freaky than other Blunt-related songs. But "And I'll Show You Heaven If U Let Me" is still decidedly fucked: the sweet, twinkling melody floating high above passively battles with a scuzzy guitar riff that barely knows what to do with itself with each iteration. The drums,

meanwhile, sound like someone doing a soundcheck, as a quiet keyboard hums in the background, barely heard but certainly felt. Like the best of Blunt's music, it's hazy, aggressively sloppy, and ends before you know it.

The remixed/remastered version of *The Narcissist II* is out November 26 on Hippos In Tanks/World Music. There's no release date set for its follow up, *The Narcissist III*, so you might as well re-spin Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland's *Black Is Beautiful* (TMT Review) before you finalize that geeky year-end list of yours.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "The Narcissist" [a cappella version]

WATCH

by MR P · October 30, 2012

Yesterday, Hype Williams' Dean Blunt threw a couple new songs on SoundCloud, "Need 2 Let U Go" and "And I'll Show You Heaven If U Let Me," both of which are long gone. But thankfully, Denna Glass, fashion icon and makeup consultant for Marie Claire magazine, is blowin' up our inbox again, this time with a link to an amazingly uncomfortable a cappella cover of "The Narcissist" by bathroom inhabitant Jstar Valentine (who in fact did an a cappella version of the same song at a higher pitch just two weeks ago). It's painful to both watch and listen to. It's also amazing.

Two other vids to spend your time with:
[dead links]

"The Narcissist" is off The Narcissist II mixtape, which will see a remixed/remastered version out November 26 on Hippos In Tanks/World Music. As Jstar put it: "Please go out the to support Dean Blunt."

Dean Blunt's "White Flight"
OHWOW Gallery; Los Angeles, CA

[11-03-2012]

Live Blog

by MAX POWER · November 8, 2012

The OHWOW gallery space was quite large, perhaps the length of a basketball court, although maybe a little smaller. The walls and floors were white. I arrived at the very beginning of Dean Blunt's first American gallery performance, "White Flight," not long after Blunt (Hype Williams) had finished setting up the space. At least, I believe he set up the space; there is photographic evidence on Twitter suggesting as much. Anyway, why I note that is because, when I arrived, the table, which was immediately to the right upon entering, was piled with alcohol (*Cîroc*) and fruit juice and those red and white plastic cups. (There were also two potted, fake plants at the foot of the table). At the center of the gallery space was a table, piled on and surrounded by In-N-Out burgers and fries. There must have been a couple hundred dollars worth of fast food on/around the table. No one really touched it until the hour-and-a-half mark, but some people sporadically took fries off the table throughout the night. Unsurprisingly, the alcohol was gone within the first 20 minutes.

Scattered all around the floor were dark red balloons (*#99luftballons*). Throughout the night, balloons were popped and kicked and thrown around without any apparent reason, but balloon interaction was, overall, pretty infrequent.

Furthermore, three shirtless black men who weren't allowed to speak spent the night flexing, posing, and photobombing — I kid you not — almost every attempted photo I witnessed.

There was also loud, commercial rap music playing throughout the entire event. Occasionally people danced, but mostly they didn't.

There was a rather large, semi-thuggish white guy walking around. He was there alone (I talked with him after the show, and he said, “Yeah, I was supposed to come with a friend, but he had to babysit…,” and then evaded every subsequent question that I asked). Throughout the night, he walked around yelling “psyche!” at the black men, throwing money on the ground, and then intimidating the guy who picked up (stole?) the money. (After the show, in a moment of dubious clarity, he asked me if I had seen who “did it.” I had. I had seen everything that happened that night.)
I’m genuinely uncertain as to whether or not this guy was a part of the show. I saw the black men getting paid at the end of the event, but this guy was never paid. I find it curious that the most intimidating person, the one who tried to establish any control over the seemingly aimless happening, was a large and semi-thuggish white guy.

I guess in a performance like this you can’t control everything that happens. For the most part, people came in, drank, looked at the food, stood around, talked with their friends, and then left. I stood against the wall, watching, the entire time. One person asked me what was going on, while another even asked me if I was Dean Blunt. I didn’t drink or eat, and I spent most of the time watching the schmoozing that happens at these kind of things, judging peoples’ fashion sensibilities (sorry), smiling at people who looked at/photographed me, and texting my girlfriend, in real time, everything I was seeing. But, eventually, something always happens. Toward the end of the night, the thuggish white guy came up and asked me if I wanted to use the balloons as a bed. My girlfriend had just told me to do something weird, so I said, reluctantly, “sure?” I walked over to the corner where he had gathered all the remaining balloons. A couple guys followed us. He told me to lie down, so I lied down in the pool of dark red balloons. Someone took pictures of me lying there, and when I stood up, I instinctively bowed. At that point, the event was basically over.

I wonder: did I enjoy “White Flight?” Was that even the point? The truth is that I stuck around for all of it, so in some respect, yes, I did. It was clear early on that Dean Blunt would not be playing music, and that what I saw was what I was going to get. It was also clear that it was, in some respect, a social experiment, and the conclusions were pretty predictable. I got some self-satisfaction as I was able to determine what would happen, and when. I enjoyed the questions that I asked myself *while I was there*, alone in the gallery, watching. But something hit me as I was standing outside, after the event had finished and as I was driving home. A few blocks away, and an hour later, James Ferraro and Dean Blunt would be playing actual music together at the Soho House in West Hollywood (which is, for all intents and purposes, a country club for monied, “creative” elites). The title of their Soho piece was “Watch the Throne,” while the title of the OHWOW Gallery performance was “White Flight.” On the one hand, a thousand-dollar show in luxury, and on the other, a free gallery show with shitty hip-hop, fast food, and relatively cheap alcohol. The distinction seemed too obvious. And what had initially felt like a potentially interesting, if somewhat obvious, social experiment/performance piece became a reminder that most of us didn’t have access to the real show, and that we likely never would.

[Photo: Barron Machat]

♫♪ Dean Blunt meets James Ferraro - “Watch The Throne”

LISTEN

by MR P · November 9, 2012

Just another Friday night waiting for another reason to write about either Dean Blunt or James Ferraro, and what do I get? A Blunt/Ferraro collaboration called “Watch The Throne”! The 18-minute performance, recorded live to an incredibly talkative audience November 3 at the Soho House in Beverly Hills (after Blunt’s puzzling “White Flight” performance at the OHWOW Gallery earlier that day), features Blunt on vocals/Fender Rhodes and Ferraro on grand piano. Yes, you read that right: rather than being some sort of odd meeting between Blunt’s gritty comatose aesthetic and Ferraro’s crisp HD visions, “Watch The Throne” is marked instead by impressionistic chords, spacious phrasings, and suspended rhythms. Blunt’s vocals are as disconnected as the mood, with both artists seemingly feeling their way through this pensive, meandering number.

It’s unclear whether “Watch the Throne” refers to the collaboration, this particular performance, or something else (like, say, a collaboration between Jay-Z and Kanye West?), but in any case, there is a “Watch the Throne” tour coming soon, and I’m going to be all over it. Check out the performance here:

[dead link]

Meanwhile, Hippos In Tanks released James Ferraro’s new album *Sushi* earlier this week and is set to release a remixed/remastered version of Blunt’s *The Narcissist II* mixtape on November 26. Life is good.

Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland start their own imprint, look to Warner Music Group for inspiration

News

by MIKE REID · November 16, 2012

With Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland, there’s an inherent risk of unexplained, spontaneous disavowal, but as music journalists, what are we supposed to do, *not* report the news?! To reference a relevant simile, they seem wholly unconcerned with whether or not they’re playing us like a fiddle. Only that’s not a fiddle, it’s a drum machine. Only that’s not them working the drum machine, it’s a clerk from the local convenience mart. The drum machine has since instantly transformed into one of those contraptions on which hot dogs rotate. The mixer is now a Slurpee machine. Oh, I guess I just… okay. Hm.

Regardless, *The Wire* received word that Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland have started their own label — an imprint called World Music Group. A statement accompanying the announcement reads as follows:

“Most future recording/works will be issued or licensed through this channel.” And that’s it. Now we wait.
(In other news, listen to Blunt’s recent “Watch The Throne” collaboration with James Ferraro here, and take note of the fact that the Hippos In Tanks reissue of Blunt’s mixtape *The Narcissist II* will be released not too long from now, on November 26.)

♫♪ Hype Williams - London 2012

LISTEN
by SQUEO · November 23, 2012

Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland have uploaded to SoundCloud a new, sure-to-be-fleeting track under their old Hype Williams moniker this morning. It was limited to 100 downloads, so you’re already too late for that (should have camped outside World Music Group HQ last night!), but you can still stream “GALICE” from your choice of desktop, laptop, or mobile device. In the song, Copeland’s reserved croon sounds a bit cleaner than on *Black Is Beautiful*, but the rapid-fire sirens, cracks, and gun-cock keep the mood frantic and increasingly claustrophobic.

According to FACT, “GALICE” comes from a new tour CD titled *London 2012*, and will be available at tomorrow night’s show, where they are scheduled to perform at the Tufnell Park Dome in London.

[Update: The full, 20-minute *London 2012* tour CD has been posted to their SoundCloud and shared for download via WeTransfer! Listen below.]

[dead link]

2012 Favorite Music Releases

10. Dean Blunt
The Narcissist II
[World Music Group/Hippos in Tanks]

“I can’t talk to you,” snarled the deeply frustrated, highly repugnant male subject of Dean Blunt’s *The Narcissist II*, before smacking his lover and tumbling into a mental morass of wheezing drone, wireless interference, and YouTube-compressed storm clouds. Upon reemerging, he found a troubling means of expression: self-reflexive “come hither” song sketches glued together by R&B cliché, but too ragged and paranoid to settle into any genre in particular. Here, songcraft congealed from artful escape into pathological avoidance, recentering the drama by way of co-opted language and mood, a comforting cloud of smoke blown at the bathroom mirror. But as the outside world intrudes — with violent narrative interjections, ringtone keyboard lines, the scraping whirr of a crusty apartment — that projected image warped and stretched to let through slivers of actual alienation. Blunt’s uncomfortable vocal delivery upped the tension, slipping from playful to sinister to desperate, hilariously confused but

disturbing in context. On the sublime title track, at the singer's lowest moment, he hurled out a strange request to *"fold"* her, some despairing desire trapped between fucking and holding, a smeared impulse left unresolved as the song washed away in a wave of canned critical applause. One of many bent transmissions from Hype Williams HQ in 2012, *The Narcissist II* may have been their most unusual and affecting infiltration yet. –SQUEO

02. Dean Blunt And Inga Copeland
Black Is Beautiful
[Hyperdub]

From the dark, slow burn of Andy Stott and Black Rain to the more elaborate gloomscapes of Raime and Demdike Stare, black was serious currency in the international dance underground of 2012. Typical, then, that perhaps the year's most convincing celebration of the color came wrapped in a red sleeve, the cover text referencing African-American consumer culture rag *Ebony* (black, amirite?). But if that undermined blacker-than-thou pretensions elsewhere, the act of détournement itself sprung from another scene entirely: Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland started out performing thriftstore improv in small galleries, and although their Hyperdub deal surprised many, it didn't stop them from diversifying their gallery portfolio as career outsiders peddling homebrew psychedelia. For some listeners, the joy of *Black Is Beautiful* was found in the diversity of its frame of reference — surely only one band can connect the dots between Bruce Haack, Mick Harris, Nami Shimada, and Billy Cobham while sounding like no one but themselves — yet of all the contradictions and paradoxes that keep Blunt and Copeland afloat, perhaps the likeliest is that, all posturing aside, they are not incompetents. They are just competent enough, flaunting a rare and bewildering equilibrium forged in the crucible of on-the-fly collaborative composition. Against all appearances, *Black Is Beautiful* was a matter of precision. –REED SCOTT REID

2013

Dean Blunt fleshes out details on first "proper solo LP" *The Redeemer*, out in May on Hippos in Tanks

News
by SQUEO · January 25, 2013

Disrupting the yuletide cheer of the holiday season, Dean Blunt announced in December that an LP titled *The Redeemer* was coming in "Spring 2013," accompanied by a brief snippet of music along the same confounding modern-MIDI-classical lines as "FLAXEN" and the no-longer-available "PALACE PAVILION." Now Blunt has released details about the mystery album via press release gabber from "Rhys Raiskin" (a quick Google search identifies him as a miscellaneous crew member for the production of *Spring Breakers*…), and who knows what of it is applicable to reality.

Most plausible is the release date of May 1, via Hippos in Tanks and new Blunt/Copeland imprint World Music. Described as a "sonic evolution" but thematically linked to last year's chart-topping podcast-concrète-turned-180-gram-vinyl *The Narcissist II* (TMT Review), this "first official solo LP" expands on said amorphous infatuation tales, where "the listener becomes the character in Blunt's unflattering romance, receiving scorned voicemail messages and whispers from lovers." No tracklist is yet available, but the music is described as uncharacteristically lavish, "orchestral sonatas" that recall "none" of "the usual misdirection and tape hiss of former Blunt affiliated releases." We'll see about all that. Hippos in Tanks tweeted a pic of the "mastering" process with a few more clues; "FLAXEN" looks to be on the 19-track album, along with what looks to be tracks titled "DEMON," "AIR PIE," and "#ff."

Are you excited about the album? Are you uninterested? Do you think Blunt is a complete "scumbag"? Let us know in the comments section below.

♫♪ Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland - "Stalker 5 (future favela ipanema 2069 VIP mix)"

WATCH

by MR P · January 29, 2013

We have no idea where these stalker videos are going (if they're going anywhere), but here we have the fifth installment of Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland's "stalker" series anyway, and things are as confusing as they were before. This is actually sorta like the sixth installment, since there was a New Jersey edition of stalker #5 last year, but in any case, here we have the stalker finding himself in Rio de Janeiro, sitting awkwardly on a chair. It's (kinda) fucked up. It's (kinda) scary. It's (definitely) #waynerooney #nike #sparkplugs and #motorcycles.

And, at last, the stalker speaks: "ainy my fault black boyz do it betta boo."

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "Papi"

LISTEN

by MR P · January 29, 2013

On May 1, our lives will change for[ever/the better] when Dean Blunt — provocateur, stalker, and all-around cute guy — releases his first "proper" solo album, The Redeemer on Hippos In Tanks/World Music. To get you excited, Blunt just released a track from the album titled "Papi," which features clear-as-day vocals over a sample of Pink Floyd's "Echoes." It ends with a canny New Year's countdown, unsettling and awkward, as it should be.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "ROAD 2 REDEMPTION"

LISTEN

by C MONSTER · April 24, 2013

Don't fucking talk about it. Don't even look at it in the eyes. This ain't on The Redeemer. This that "ROAD 2 REDEMPTION." Take it in strides. Take in long/deep breathes. Have it out for everything you want to say. Have it around next Wednesday. Thanks to Hippos in Tanks. Thanks to wealthy metaphors. I want it all! I want it right now. Two times I repeat the first word of every sentence. Two times I gotta look at these words to be careful. You been careful? You ever feel anxious? Trust in your gut instinct. Trust that Dean Blunt will never stop making music you'll love. Keep it around. Keep praying. It's about the art. It's collapsing in on me. Next time we'll *get* it all. Next Wednesday *Redeemer* is coming out on Hippos in Tanks. So I'm buying all the copies. So you can only hear it digitally. Hi. Hi!!!

♫♪ Dean Blunt - *The Redeemer*

LISTEN

by C MONSTER · May 1, 2013

My boii Mickey 'bout to pop OFF in his lab when I link him to this post. Been waiting on that hard *Redeemer* drop for[ever]. So-what-if-it-on Pitchfork Media Inc. More importantly, has Dean Blunt ripped himself out that narcissism? I'll bet y'all "IMPERIAL GOLD" this album crushes 2013. Feel the weight. Read our review by jDean coming soon. Now hit it hard; make them balls bounce. Hoops. Halos. One-on-one with *The Redeemer*.

~~~~~ ALBUM REVIEW ~~~~

Dean Blunt

The Redeemer

[Hippos in Tanks/World Music; 2013]

by SQUEO

STYLES: R&B, dance
OTHERS: K-Ci & JoJo

In the closing minutes of last year's dragging, drifting *The Narcissist II* mini-album, Dean Blunt's narcotized R&B lothario hits the ceiling of his own nihilism and narrowly avoids free-fall by stalking and whining his way into a bona fide pop hit, restoring his confidence with an immediate rush of affirmation (and probably cocaine) that, oddly enough, parallels the real-world response to Blunt's music. *The Redeemer*, then, with its veneer of newfound professionalism, would suggest a continuation and expansion of that linked narrative — the grounded follow-up to an overhyped mixtape, with all the inner and outer signifiers of career maturation on display: high-gloss production, broad palette of sound, "real musicianship," single premiere on Pitchfork, tastefully plasticized/embossed CD/LP in wide release. The abundance of references to religion — "Demon," "Jericho," "Seven Seals," an emoji-fied representation of Dürer's famous praying hands sketch —

intensify this atmosphere of cleaned-up piety, as if the artist (being a true narcissist) read his own reviews and gleaned that he might need some serious outside help.

Of course, you'd have to be pretty thick to take Blunt at face value by now; his seeming embodiment and parody of celebrity worship has been a losing game for anyone trying to tidily summarize his persona, let alone his work. But *The Redeemer* does come across as something closer to honesty and warmth than anything we've previously heard or seen from Blunt, and where that first seems possible is (somewhat paradoxically) in the endless undermining, reframing, and rug-pulling of his own symbolic narrative. Billed as a start-to-finish relationship study, complete with a romantic, string-saturated prelude and dramatic solo piano closer, the actual story remains frustratingly out of focus, eluding interrogation with its strange syntax, genre meldings, and distinct lack of movement despite a dizzying back-and-forth emotional pull. The periodic voicemails, a potentially useful shortcut to clear exposition, are difficult to make out and proceed without much progression, as if the same vague sentiment is gradually decaying with repetition. If a "plot" exists, it adheres to one of Ben Marcus's preferred definitions: "small piece of ground," "setting," "the space in which a story occurs." The narrative is largely *felt* as a thematic trajectory, a cyclical journey from the first spark of love, to its erosion into parody, to its sudden renewal as understood through a glass darkly.

Because *The Redeemer* is music, not an audiobook or radio play, the relationship between the artist's inner, often seedy motivations and the outer, concrete aesthetic results is even harder to grasp, and Blunt is constantly playing with context to deny the listener a grounded perspective, sounding heartfelt on one listen and coming across deeply cynical on the next. Album opener "I Run New York," an auspiciously lavish orchestral miniature that gives off an acceptable, recognizable scent of swag mixed with luxury, crumbles after a little online research reveals the song to be lifted entirely from K-Ci & JoJo. Everything after this "betrayal" sounds like it might secretly be a sample, from the pounding backing drums of "Demon" to the delicately fingerpicked folk of "Imperial Gold." Even the parts clearly being "played" feel like samples being triggered by keyboard, as in the clipped ends of "Flaxen's" strings and its synth vocals seeming to mouth the words "synth" and "sing" — as if the sonics were signifying themselves, their intent, and pointing in another transient direction within the song's context. Anything remotely lo-fi is relegated to the far background, a sort of ringing tinnitus at the edges of Blunt's white-space sparse arrangements, and this too gains significance when reframed as the twinkling foil to a truly dumb guitar jam on "All Dogs Go to Heaven," as if the shambling techniques were searching for entry to a heaven somewhere beyond the edge of the music's fidelity. Blunt's con artist fails, track by track, to transcend the mess of his own circular, epiphany-free life by only *signifying* honesty, and the listener is prone to recoil with a blanket mistrust and pretty much lose the "plot" entirely; an abusive relationship indeed.

So the idea of an honest attempt at redemption is a non-starter and a joke, from the plagiarized spirituality of "New York" to the piano solo on "Brutal" that Blunt can't even stick around to hear, letting the final harrowing notes play out as he lights up in the booth and disappears. Fine. But what makes the listening experience so addictive isn't an onanistic joy at recognizing and being let in on the joke, but at feeling that subconscious longing in spite of the endless obfuscation, a dark but powerful

sense of recognition in the flubbed delivery, the human error and uncalculated sonic utterances that peek through even in a character succumbing to the enormous outside pressure to define oneself or drown. After the shock of being "tricked" dies down, Blunt's short-circuiting of the boundaries of taste and instilled critical response feels liberating, a "redeemed" sensation of pure aesthetic, divorced from but still haunted by its many signifiers, mercifully limited to the handful of contexts it's situated in (sound/song/album/music industry) and more than enough to boggle the brain.

~~Ultimately~~ For now, *The Redeemer*'s many tangles make even some of the most personal music this year sound tedious and separated from social reality, and Blunt's sometimes off-putting presence is much easier to accept when he gives this much agency to the listener, recognizing again and again that we must all frame our experiences in our own ways or risk feeling nothing at all.

What the folk? Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland release Joanne Robertson's saddest, prettiest folk song on World Music

News

by LIZ LOUCHE · June 14, 2013

Part of the magic about Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland's musical output is that ya never know what those two crazy kids are gonna do next. Like the Domino's Pizza Noid (RIP) or any Scooby Doo villain, the only thing fans can be sure of is that Blunt and Copeland are gonna do what you least expect. (Okay, everyone kinda expected the Noid would try to ruin your pizza, but at least he was really, really creative about it.) Will they release a new album under the Hype Williams name? Put out a solo record that's limited to like 20 copies under only one of their names, but strongly featuring them both? Release what just might be the most haunting, fragile folk record of 2013?

Well, for the purposes of this story, the answer is the latter. Yes! Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland's World Music label is putting out a mysterious (in true Hype Williams "keyword: enigmatic" style) release of some sort — be it an EP, LP, or just a single, no one outside of World Music really knows — by recent Blunt-collaborator Joanne Robertson. It's Robertson you hear on Dean Blunt's *The Redeemer* (TMT Review), singing on "Imperial Gold" and "Demon." Whatever the new release will be, it'll be the follow-up to Robertson's 2007 album *The Lighter*. Check out the brilliant and heartbreaking and confusing-in-a-Hype-Williams-context track "Heat" below:

[dead link]

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “Felony / Stalker 7”

WATCH

by C MONSTER · June 25, 2013

What a weiiiiird state of music here. Not only is a pal of mine going through exactly what Dean Blunt is singing about on “Felony,” but it’s deep on an enjoyment level. I think I listened to the first minute of “Felony” three times before hearing the rest of the song. Dean just gets his money hard. Stares straight in the eyes without making a move and you bleeding. The music and video both reach out and grab you by the face, eyes, and ears. Look what you’ve done to him. Facing the opposite direction of a blind turn while walking backward: reckless. Dark hat, shirt, pants, shoes… taped up bumper. The fellah rides low-light. Lays it out raw. Keep doing this to him. His music is kind of needed in a lot of people’s lives. I also heard from no reliable source at all that James Ferraro shot this video. Oh, and “Stalker 7” is the narration of my life following Dean Blunt’s works. It’s the picture of this post. The lingering Nike or Livestrong slogans. This man IS a mission. Visions striping his eyes. Fury bubbling/sizzling cross his brain. This is Dean Blunt.

Dean Blunt shows Europe a little (touring) love; Europe genuinely unsure how to respond

News

by TAYLOR PETERS · July 18, 2013

Like that new neighbor who likes to kiss your wife on the mouth and who follows you to work even though he works on the other side of town, Dean Blunt is in the mood to show Europe a little bit of difficult-to-respond-to love. He calls it “redeeming” but we all know what he really means. He’s going to stalk Europe to its car; he’s going to send it flowers and chocolates with cryptic notes; he’s probably going to make some more music while living inside of it.

He’s also going to hit the road (2 redemption), touring Europe starting in September and stretching into December. He’ll be looking for more people to gaze upon longingly from the shadows. For those of you in Europe, my recommendation is that you take a flashlight with you everywhere you go, but I think we all know that won’t do much good.

Dates:

09.11.13 - London, UK - 100 Club
10.11.13 - Barcelona, Spain - Cccb
11.07.13 - Lisbon, Portugal - Teatro Maria Matos
11.21.13 - Brussels, Belgium - AB
11.22.13 - Berlin, Germany - Festsaal Kreuzberg
11.23.13 - Copenhagen, Denmark - Jazzhouse
11.25.13 - Amsterdam, Netherlands - Bimhuis
11.26.13 - Paris, France - Point Ephemere
11.29.13 - Bristol, UK - Arnolfini

11.30.13 - Liverpool, UK - Blade Factory
12.01.13 - Glasgow, UK - The Arches

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “Champagne Dance Scene”

LISTEN
by MR P · July 22, 2013

The long wait is over: Dean Blunt has finally released a preview of his forthcoming movie, *The Rhinestone Bezel*!! Okay, okay. We had no idea he was releasing a movie. In fact, we don’t even know that it’s a movie at all. (Can’t forget too that Dean Blunt isn’t even his real name.) But according to the SoundCloud description of a newly released track called “Champagne Dance Scene,” it seems as though TMT All-Star Dean Blunt *might* be releasing something called *The Rhinestone Bezel* that is *apparently* due “in cinemas Winter 2013.” Check out “Champagne Dance Scene” below, a moody, foreboding creeper — separated into two sections by four and a half minutes of silence — that drags itself slowly and hypnotically to no specific end.

And don’t forget about The Redeemer, one of our favorite releases of the year, out now on World Music/Hippos in Tanks.

Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland are no longer affilliated, but there might be new Hype Williams material coming

News
by SQUEO · August 10, 2013

The “cplnd” SoundCloud associated with Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland has put up a brief snippet of a beat called “DADDY ISSUES.”

[dead link]

Here’s the caption for the clip:

> DEAN BLUNT AND INGA COPELAND ARE NO LONGER AFFILIATED .
> PLEASE LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR FUTURE ‘INGA COPELAND’ MATERIAL/
> HYPE WILLIAMS ‘A BULLET IN YR EYE THROWING MONEY TO THE SKY’ …
> soon
> Denna Frances Glass
> 10 August 2013

So, Hype Williams are no more, it seems, but there’s also a new release by Hype Williams coming in the near future. The Hype Williams moniker has been used for different lineups before (which have even included Joanne Robertson at some point), so it’s not certain whether the music mentioned refers to a posthumous album of Dean & Inga or a new iteration involving one or none of them. They’ve both

been working things out solo this year, so whatever happens I doubt Blunt/Copeland/Glass/etc. will be disappearing any time soon. But the "eighteen-year 'relay project'" marches on…. dead or alive.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "King James"

LISTEN

by MR P · August 22, 2013

It was recently announced that Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland, together known as Hype Williams, are officially no longer affiliated, but both artists have been active nonetheless — Dean Blunt especially. Just recently, Blunt did a fantastic interview with Interview Magazine (Russia), posted a couple videos from a casting call for an upcoming play (Boo'd Up, Winter 2013), and has been performing in select cities around the world, including this recent show in NY.

And now we have a new song, "King James," the title of which references either this guy or this guy (or both or neither [or nothing or everything]). The MP3's tags (which are in Russian) seem to indicate that the song is track 3 of a release called Island of Stone, but who the fuck knows. In any case, Blunt, over a cut-up sample processed through a sweeping comb filter effect, seems to be in yet another ruminative and inquisitive mindset à la The Redeemer. And it's as raw as ever.
Stream below and download while you can.

Dean Blunt unexpectedly drops new album Stone Island in Russia, available to DL and stream now

News

by MR P · August 23, 2013

Just a few hours ago, I posted a track from Dean Blunt that I thought was called "King James," but I also speculated that, after scanning the MP3's tags, it could be track #3 of a release called Island of Stone. Well, thanks to TMT reader Vinícius Ortolano, I'm happy to report that I was partially correct! The track is actually called "Three" (at least in the context of this Russian release) and, according to Russian website Афиша, is off a new 10-track Dean Blunt album called Stone Island. The best part? It's already out.

The album, a thematic and aesthetic continuation of the issues he introduced on The Redeemer, was recorded in full in a Moscow hotel room last week. Stream it here:

[dead link]

The album is available for download here too, but you may encounter problems extracting due to how the files are named. If that's the case, try here or here.

Seriously, aren’t we lucky to have an artist like Dean Blunt in our lives?
Stone Island tracklist:
01. One
02. Two
03. Three
04. Four
05. Five
06. Six
07. Stone Island
08. Eight
09. Heat (feat. Joanne Robertson)
10. Ten

~~~~~ ALBUM REVIEW ~~~~~

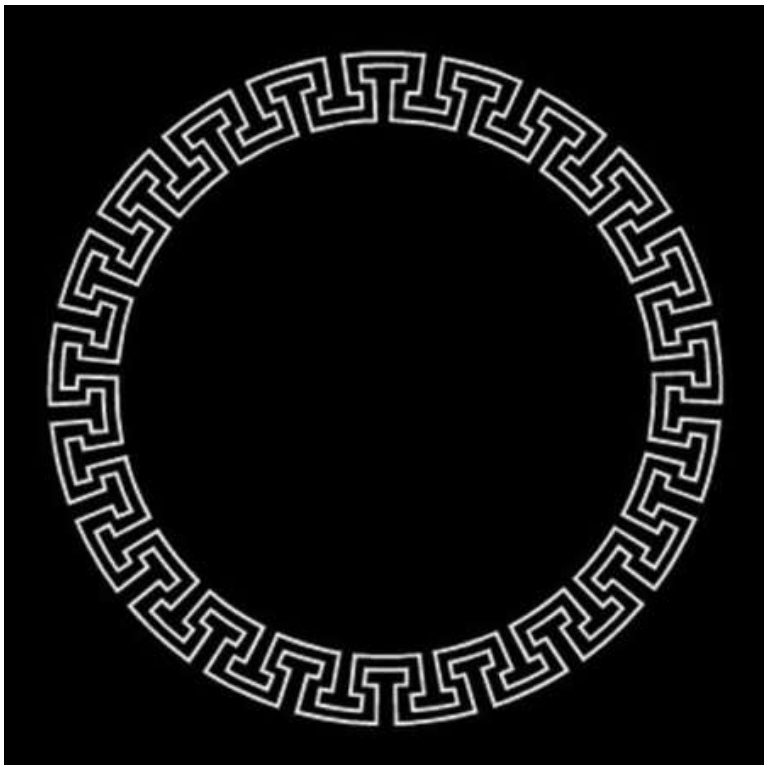
Dean Blunt

by BIRKUT

Stone Island

[Self-Released; 2013]

STYLES: bargain basement soul/folk, 404 – Oops, we couldn't find that sound, This video does not exist., This track is currently not available.
OTHERS: Glenn Danzig, Igor Stravinsky, Арсений Жиляев



Dean Blunt has become increasingly reserved over the last few years when discussing his art with the press, but should it follow that mystery must now lie at the core of every project? Sometimes we'd like it to. That's why it still feels as though I've been hunting for leads as opposed to reading about public reactions to his latest offering, but those flashes of curiosity might also have a lot to do with its sudden and unexpected emergence. Everything about Stone Island's release breeches modern distribution conventions: there was no PR, no scheduled release date, and not a word from the artist or his label indicating that a fresh set of cuts were on the way. But why should there have been? When taking Hype Williams' relatively short history into account, it's more surprising that such conventional steps were taken when Blunt dropped his first solo full-length, The Redeemer back in May. But here we are. A

rare interview that took place in Moscow, a show sponsored by The British Council, a follow-up interview for Афиша, and brand new album to go with it, all in the span of three weeks.

Blunt's exclusivity with Russian press could easily be downplayed as an incentive to keep the rest of the world on their toes, even though previous Hype Williams interviews published in Russian have offered more about the artist's identities than almost any other. Our addiction at TMT has been unrestrained since 2011, but we are not alone in the online goose chase, in panning the sand for another clue that might lead to more material. Over time, we've learned to lower expectations and enjoy each YouTube clip and SoundCloud file while they remain available, either as some rogue cog in a fantastical art partnership or as an idea unlikely to ever be expanded on. The only reason this works in Blunt's favor is because the music he makes is simply fascinating, and Stone Island is no exception. That it comes shrouded in some bizarre story about being recorded in a Moscow hotel room doesn't alter how extraordinary these songs are.

It's hardly shocking to learn that the Google translation of Blunt's most recent interviews from Russian to English offer very little insight into the album's production: an obsession with an Alice In Chains set, a reluctance to speak about Inga Copeland or his music, an affinity for "Bullet" by The Misfits, and an indication that he might not be present at his Moscow gig. Indeed, the location appears to be irrelevant from the outset, but like Copeland, Blunt has quite a following in Russia. He's also demonstrated an enthusiasm for travel while working on new productions, and the Strelka show provides justification for speaking to local media first — how important is language online anyway, when each and every sentence can be mercilessly decoded at the click of a button? Ironically, ease in accessing information and the ability to instantaneously decipher (then ultimately subvert) the results can be found at the heart of Stone Island; like Blunt's earlier work, it builds upon heavily displaced sample material in order to encrypt personal sentiments using freely available online art.

An artistic restlessness continues to grow within Blunt's output, and catching his audience unawares is part of the kick. In the lead-up to The Redeemer, a SoundCloud file of "Flaxen" was distributed as a taste of things to come. Discussion quickly shifted from the repercussions of 2012's exquisite Black Is Beautiful to estimations about the next album's content, for that introduction demonstrated a fresh draw on musical sabotage. Where The Narcissist II was a single-track mix that wallowed in cloudy muffle and violent dialogue, the latest approach felt uncharacteristically refined, an acute display of MIDI string programming and choral harmony. Blunt had drastically altered tack, and because The Redeemer then proved to have shed the gritty, lo-fi tech of previous projects, including Hype Williams (which experienced a lineup change only a matter of weeks ago), an essential ingredient was brought to the fore: the artist's voice. Blunt has sung on a number of tracks in the past — he even lip-synced to the camera on one of his more recent uploads, "Felony" — but when his graceful and urgent purr came cradled in the trappings of Fleetwood Mac's "Oh Daddy" or bound up in the excited percussion of Kate Bush's "Sat In Your Lap," it was framed in a new light, and for this reviewer, that emphasized one of the most seductive features in his latest bag of tricks.

Aesthetically, Stone Island continues where The Redeemer left off (minus any menacing guitar romp), but it also borrows heavily from the harp strings and harmony sections on “Flaxen,” “Y3,” and “The Pedigree.” The album is brilliant because it largely deviates from the thick and heady samples that Blunt has seemed so comfortable with in the past, and this expressive shift complements his vocal timbre incredibly well. “Shame on her/ She knows my name” he presses on “Two,” his voice counter-punching back and forth behind a GarageBand drum section; nothing implies that he is singing in earnest or that he is referring to anyone in particular, but a feeling of impassioned regret resonates within his somber tone. Even though the vocals are calmly spoken, they deal a rapid blow: “And nobody’s gonna catch you when you’ve fallen down/ And nobody’s gonna want you when I run you out of town,” he threatens on “Three.” It’s a stark caution that submerges into the harrowing space of his first mixtape, and yet, because of how wonderfully these songs have been arranged, emphasis is sure to be placed on the samples that play into such frank and baleful bruising.

Blunt here focuses more on the mood of his work as a whole than on the treatment of his samples. Where The Narcissist II was straight-up, down-and-out a rowdy lo-fi back-alley ruckus, Stone Island once again pilfers from a more refined palette. It’s tricky to talk about source material in terms of expectancy, but the most surprising choice is undoubtedly Pentangle’s “Light Flight.” Although it sounds at odds with anything Blunt has borrowed from before, it beautifully accompanies Joanne Robertson’s folk-infused “Heat,” a gracious acoustic number that comes veiled in its own little mystery: Blunt and Copeland’s World Music was said to be working with Robertson earlier this year, and “Heat” accompanied the announcement as an apparent celebration. The track was then removed from SoundCloud without warning only to appear on Stone Island a week later, but like everything else at the periphery of this record, Robertson’s contribution is what matters the most, and it suits the atmosphere perfectly. Then there’s Stravinsky’s “The Rite of Spring (Scenes of Pagan Russia in two parts): Spring Round Dances,” which is perhaps a nod to the supposed recording location; Blunt completely rearranges an original recording of the fourth movement with a bare-faced loop that skips over and over again across “Six.” It’s a terrific juxtaposition of high and low art, where on the flip-side, Blunt includes a sample from American neo-soul musician and Grammy award winner Gerald Maxwell. It counteracts any argument that trips Blunt up for arranging classical pieces; he picks and chooses from the infinite chasm of the web and finds songs that suit his mood, regardless of how they might have been heard before.

Clearly, then, Blunt is not interested in creating music that’s perceived less interesting than the concepts/gossip surrounding it. Hype Williams might have come close to that during their live shows, and Blunt has also cast doubt over attendees at his exhibitions, but with his music, he continues to release material that demolishes any preconceptions about his approach. As an artist, he’s keen to experiment with seditious tactics while moving further away from tried and tested rules of engagement — Blunt isn’t daft enough to suggest his work is wholly original, but in the Афиша interview, he talks about striving to try new things, as long as they aren’t plainly rehashing old tropes: why would you want to spend time with an imitation of some garage rock band from the 60s when you can have the real deal? “It’s been done before,” Blunt declares, “if I want to listen to garage rock, I’ll listen to The Sonics.”

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “HENNESSEY”

LISTEN

by C MONSTER · October 2, 2013

Look, some people just go through bad breakups. Sometimes there’s baggage beyond the physical. On occasion, shit’s left behind. In the case of now defunct Hype Williams, Dean Blunt is just having a hard time letting go of samples (potentially) made by Inga Copeland (now copeland). Actually, this whole track comes at listeners in a misleading way. Who knows, the sample *could* even be Joanne Robertson.

The SoundCloud is under the name cplnd. Under the cplnd profile is a link, including the description, “[I’ve] fancied Nick for several years and am looking to meet someone with the same type of look . So if you would like to rescue an attractive late 30s lady from a reclusive existence let me know.” Furthermore, the brilliance of it all is if Blunt keeps referring to relationships in all his songs, he and Copeland will always remain insidiously together, in posts like this one you’re reading. Harmoniously hyperlinked throughout. But without a doubt, he’ll find something else to brilliantly tackle. Eventually. Maybe.
Bottom line: new track “HENNESSY” has Dean Blunt crooning atop a looped female vocal, and the man is THIRSTY.
/__CHEERS|CHEERS|CHEERS|CHEERS|CHEERS|CHEERS|CHEERS__\

♫♪ Dean Blunt meets James Ferraro - “Watch the Throne 2”

LISTEN

by MR P · November 12, 2013

Since we’re essentially a Dean Blunt and James Ferraro blog now, we of course had to post this bootlegged performance between the two last month at Unsound Festival in Kraków, Poland. The unannounced, impromptu jam session, titled “Watch the Throne 2” (the follow-up to their equally bizarre 2012 collaboration), lasted over 40 minutes, with Blunt on Rhodes/vocals and Ferraro on the venue’s house piano. Like last year’s performance, the two meander about on their respective instruments, with no clear scale or unified trajectory to anchor the sounds. Save for a few moments of melody and progression, it barely hangs in there for the majority of the time, its (mostly) modal, impressionistic explorations ultimately serving as background music for a chatty audience, occasionally punctuated by abrupt cheering from audience members who mistake sparseness for endings.

But this wasn't intended to be a "concert" at all. Before the performance, Blunt encouraged the audience to chat, to socialize, to be as rude as possible. With no center, no spectacle, no channeling of violence or desire, we're left somewhere in the middle, drifting aimlessly and hopelessly between concepts and percepts, our gaze frustratingly directed to nowhere in particular and our ears continually expecting a resolution that never comes.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "Walls of Jericho Pt.2"

WATCH

by MR P · November 26, 2013

Earlier this year, Dean Blunt released one of the most captivating, unexpectedly solemn albums of the year with *The Redeemer*, and today, we have a video for a new song that revisits one of its standout tracks. It's called "Walls of Jericho Pt.2," and the video features a silhouetted Blunt, still obsessed and still bitter, singing to a body of water about his expectation of his former lover — who ran away on part one — coming back to him: "*I know times can get so hollow/ And I try to leave you be/ But by the time you get to hear this/ You'll be running back to me.*"

The ebbing and flowing tides, the dawn of a new day: the setting signifies hope, but time hasn't healed his wounds yet. Blunt's gaze toward the sunrise mostly just sheds light on his lingering misery.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "Love Me Thru This"

LISTEN

by BIRKUT · December 3, 2013

Former Hype Williams enigma Dean Blunt continues his work with English folk singer Joanne Robertson on a new clip posted via the cplnd SoundCloud on Nov. 29. "Love Me Thru This" continues on a meditative, sorrowful trip as Robertson sings over sampled violins and trumpets. As is always the case with Blunt, it's impossible to say where the track belongs in the context of his fragmented back catalog or whether it's hinting at another potential release.

This year has already seen him drop two incredible albums, both of which earned our Eureka! distinction: Hippos In Tanks issued The Redeemer back in May, while the Stone Island release was a lot more discreet to say the least. Fingers crossed there will be more Dean Blunt to celebrate before the year is through!

2013 Favorite Music Releases

19
Dean Blunt
Stone Island

[Self-Released]

To put it in Borgesian terms, *Stone Island* is a personal history of misanthropy. That Argentinean modernist is as good a reference point as any, for an artist as self-reflective and labyrinthine as Dean Blunt. Most of the meager coverage provided to the record focused on the recent events of the artist's life, the album's compulsive and unusual conception, and the literal construction of the music — samples, motifs and meanings. But context is, or at least should be, only of tangential interest, especially when the music was this nervy, magnetic, and halting. After all, why should one's failure to identify a Pentangle sample or understand Cyrillic script preclude their ability to recognize the lurid potency of the whole? The title itself told you all you need to know about the stoic masculinism depicted within. Was it sincerity or pretense? Did either matter terribly? Despite any conjecture regarding Blunt's artistic intentions, the matter was never definitively settled. Nevertheless, *Stone Island* continued to hold up to that presumptuous sort of scrutiny. And should you decide to check out this overlooked little record based on our recommendation, be warned: this is beauteous fiction. Believe nothing but that which you want to believe. *–EMBLING*

02
Dean Blunt
The Redeemer

[Hippos in Tanks/World Music]

Same champagne, different pourer, different hotel. That was how Dean Blunt described the relationship between his two superb releases this year. On balance, *Stone Island* may well have been the tighter of the two. But for the staff here at TMT, it was *The Redeemer* that ultimately proved the more disorienting, that hit harder, that seemed to *matter* more in the end. In part, that was simply because it came first. *This* was the record that introduced us to Blunt's strange, new, and eclectic sound, with its surprising rearticulation and extension of familiar conceptual concerns. Gone suddenly were the cool lo-fi veneer and sense of distance that had characterized his previous work. In its place, a newfound directness and apparent sincerity, even to the point of being sentimental: great tunes, heartfelt lyrics, lush strings, fluttering harps, fragile guitars, buttery vocals, all shot through with rampant religious references. Except that this is Blunt, and things are never quite as they seem. So much of what provided *The Redeemer* with its sense of weight turned out to have been shamelessly borrowed: from 16th-century Germany to 90s R&B. What was really remarkable though was just how little this seemed to matter, precisely that it *failed* to undermine any of the record's peculiar emotional force.

That, in the end, was *The Redeemer*'s great trick: to prove that neither Blunt nor his rampant appropriation were ever in need of redemption to begin with. –JAMES PARKER

2014

Dean Blunt uploads footage of next Hype Williams album and a Redeemer outtake, severs ties with Hippos in Tanks

News

by SQUEO · January 3, 2014

Over the extended holiday season Dean Blunt has been uploading, removing, and reshuffling all types of material to the "cplnd" SoundCloud, all of it involving Joanne Robertson to some degree. On "Love Me Thru This" and "DEF freestyle" she's a soothing background heartbeat to Blunt's brooding synth headaches, but the real Xmas cracker is "50 CENT"'s tag-team lyrical dosey doe, apparently a "lost tape" meant for *The Redeemer* (TMT Review). Robertson also goes it alone on the Blunt-produced "X" single.

ALSO of interest is the just-uploaded video "[1080 HD] 2014" that again mentions *A Bullet In Yr Eye, Throwin Money 2 Tha Sky*, the presumed title of the next Hype Williams release:

[Update: video's gone.]

Whoever ends up being involved in the sounds of that album (certainly feels more "Hype Williams" than his current solo output), its release will definitely not be handled by the group's (fairly) long-time label Hippos in Tanks, as Blunt outlined in an emailed statement yesterday: "There will be no mo future Dean Blunt projects released with the label Hippos in Tanks." No word on who did what or why. 2014! It's a new year!

Dean Blunt drops woozy 26-minute mixtape Skin Fade with Joanne Robertson; listen now!

News

by MR P · January 30, 2014

Dean Blunt has just dropped what appears to be a 26-minute mixtape titled *Skin Fade*, featuring seven new hypnotic tracks of the typically woozy, disorienting nature. As expected, there's no concrete information available about the release — which at the moment seems to be a SoundCloud-only joint — except that it once again features Joanne Robertson, who has been collaborating heavily with Blunt since *The Redeemer* on tracks like "Love Me Thru This," "DEF freestyle," and "X." Robertson's vocals take center stage on the bulk of the songs, but this release — at turns ethereal, noisy, narcotic, and as evasive as the artists themselves — has "classic" Blunt written all over it.

~~Stream *Skin Fade* here~~ The SoundCloud stream is gone, ~~but you can still download it direct from Blunt via this WeTransfer upload~~ NO YOU CAN'T.

No official word yet on a new Hype Williams release, but we can feel it coming.

Meanwhile, Dean Blunt's 2013 releases, *The Redeemer* and *Stone Island*, made it to #2 and #19, respectively, on our Favorite 50 Albums of 2013 list, so you know, check 'em out if you haven't already, etc.

Dean Blunt records a video single, *Mersh* 12-inch imminent, *Black Metal* full-length TBC on Rough Trade

News

by SQUEO · March 3, 2014

The increasingly prolific Dean Blunt returned over the weekend in Hype mode on new pollyjacobsen video "Mersh," a familiar sedentary YouTube scene chopped into twitching slices of white light and dark red, Friday night hyper-reel in place of slo-mo Sunday surreal, though perhaps not by choice: room-tone shit-speaker treble fills the air ("I Am Smoking In A Room") and a nearly hidden sub-bass line rattles the floor, a head-nodder but only at Blunt's slumped level. He sits up twice, addresses the camera, and freestyles, haltingly, about the maybe-importance of knowing your limits when feeling anxious or confused and also *where dat w33d at*. "It's a problem," but it's also the new single.

And it's a physical single, mate. *Mersh* as a 12-inch is "imminent" and then, believe it or not, date TBC, there's a full-length album coming on Rough Trade Records called *Black Metal*. Not sure if "Mersh" is on both releases but the word on this comes straight from Jah.

Meanwhile there's the *Free Jazz* show at Cafe OTO on April 1, maybe that Hype Williams album, maybe a solo Joanne Robertson record, and… a tour with new labelmates Warpaint? (Probably not.)

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “Free Jazz” [live at Cafe Oto]

LISTEN

by MR P · April 14, 2014

On April 1, Dean Blunt and an ensemble of artists — including three pianists (Blunt, Joanne Robertson, Emil Elg), three saxophonists (Asger Hartvig, Shabaka Hutchins, Bradley Miller), two guitarists (Blunt, Robertson), a bass player (Elg), and vocalist Liquid Thompson — gathered in London’s Cafe Oto for a show dubbed “Free Jazz.” And that it was: in just under an hour, the octet blazed through an alternately serene and terrifying set, featuring sharp transitions that took them from sprawling passages of space, mood, and texture, to pummeling, unforgiving blasts of sound that achieved an entirely different level of intensity altogether.

The set was structurally loose and flowing, but there are recurring musical themes and various textual anchors, particularly by Liquid Thompson, who reads material written by Blunt (who also takes the mic to mumble in the background and occasionally mutter “free jazz” just before a full-throttled assault). The words tend to deal with signifiers of “black identity,” with lyrical references to everyone from Wu-Tang to Jaja Soze to Sonic Youth. It’s about everything you’d expect from Blunt: a little confusing and a little cryptic, but incredibly incisive and delightfully unpredictable. Listen to the whole set here:

[dead link]

Meanwhile, Blunt’s *Mersh* 12-inch is out soon, as well as a full-length on Rough Trade called *Black Metal*.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “BLOW freestyle”

WATCH

by C MONSTER · June 25, 2014

1) I would like to shout out to Tiny Mix Tapes for being on this whole Dean Blunt crunch, forever.

2) Squeo keeps squawking at me about how I gotta post this immediately before it mysteriously vanishes.
3) Who the FUCK is Dean Blunt and why are we all obsessed with how he’s excellent at not “BEING” himself, even though we’ve NO IDEA who “himself” really is?
4) “BLOW freestyle” is flagrantly not freestyle-to-video, so what is he looking at stage right? Probz a pile of unreleased Dean Blunt material, and he’s just reveling in its worth and artistic stature.
5) I’m curious if anyone has casually stopped Dean Blunt on the street as they were a fan, and he convinced them he wasn’t Dean Blunt “…or whatever doped up band you’re talking about,” only in a Russian voice.
6) Bottom line: Dean Blunt sacrifices “SELF” every time we witness something new he’s conjured up, and it’s merely heartbreaking in the most entertaining way.

• Dean Blunt?: https://www.youtube.com/user/pollyjacobsen
• Dean Blunt??: https://soundcloud.com/urbansocialmedialounge
• Dean Blunt???: https://soundcloud.com/cplnd

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “SON freestyle”

WATCH

by SQUEO · August 6, 2014

I remember watching “Felony” for the first time last year and nearly gasping out loud when Dean Blunt suddenly looked up and sang straight to the camera. It’s not like he was camera-shy before (at all), nor is eye contact in a music video unexpected (at all), but within the closely guarded smoke-and-mirrors world of Hype Williams it felt unprecedented, a new dimension of engagement that was plainly open but more inscrutable, intensely private art copy/pasted onto the raised public platform — an unexpectedly amorphous context, with less smoke but bigger mirrors.

Since then there have been quite a few direct encounters with Blunt, and today we get a new clip: “SON freestyle.” As C pointed out with the last one, “SON” is “flagrantly not freestyle-to-video,” though maybe it’s referring to a looser presentation of a finished (*Black Metal*) product? With “BLOW,” the whole track was definitely pitch-shift tweaked, calling the finality of the song into question even as it produced a bodily chill. This one is [1080 HD] clean and clear, the contents of Blunt’s pockets laid out on the table across from us, but who knows, maybe this one’s jacked too, a two-second loop of a larger song? Questions like these always immediately come to mind and then seem like inane defense mechanisms; to get at the richness of this stuff, you have to look past the potential for trolling and take what’s put in front of you, let it seesaw through the mind, something funny, sad, weird, and raw, still so confusing but in no small way **potent**.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - *SKIN FADE* [Deluxe Edition]

LISTEN

by SQUEO · August 27, 2014

Way back in January, Dean Blunt dropped an all-originals mixtape called *SKIN FADE*, and though it came with no info or cover art (or artist name, come to think of it), the mix landed on our First Quarter Favorites list, largely because it was amazing and again unexpected from just about every angle. Unfortunately, the mix was removed almost immediately, where it’s stayed away, spoken of in hushed tones, for over six months.

But now it’s back. Blunt has just uploaded a **[Deluxe Edition]** of *SKIN FADE* for streaming/downloading via his new @jesuschrist3000ADHD SoundCloud feed. Interestingly, some portions are removed, some unheard, others renamed, and material previously labeled “Hype

Williams" is now revealed to be an integral part of "the real *SKIN FADE*." Go ahead and press play, sit on your hands, and listen to the whole thing:

[dead link]

Black Metal coming soon on Rough Trade Records.

Dean Blunt shares *Black Metal* album details, double LP out in November; listen to "50 Cent"

News

by SQUEO · September 9, 2014

"When you go to the club and every record they're playing is yours, you try to go left, and I made that mistake…there's always time fi reason…"
— Dean Blunt in conversation with Ninjaman, JA, 2014

And that is all the explanation we get from Dean Blunt regarding his new album, just put up for preorder on the Rough Trade Webstore. Here's what else we're able to suss out: it is indeed called *Black Metal*, it's available as a single CD or "heavy pressing" double LP, it has 13 tracks, the cover is all black, it's out on November 3/4, and it ends with the two songs released earlier this year as part of his "Urban" performance/Cîroc Boyz promotional night. Various tour dates are scheduled around Europe in the album lead-up (see below), and thus-far-unannounced US dates are happening in November as well.

If you preorder on iTunes or Amazon digitally, you'll get those two tracks plus this here swinging song (which was itself available for a short time earlier in the year), "50 Cent":

Between his last solo album proper, *The Redeemer*, and *Black Metal*, Blunt has released a digital album in Russia and a mixtape on SoundCloud, staged a free jazz concert, freestyled on the radio, screened the entirety of Kevin Hart's stand-up documentary *Laugh at My Pain* in a makeshift night club at the ICA, readied a new album from Hype Williams for Hyperdub, shared videos, staged plays, put on the producer hat for Joanne Robertson, and probably six or seven other things I'm forgetting. **#blackmetalseazon**
Black Metal tracklist:
01. LUSH
02. 50 CENT
03. BLOW
04. 100
05. HEAVY
06. MOLLY & AQUAFINA
07. FOREVER

08. X
09. PUNK
10. COUNTRY
11. HUSH
12. MERSH
13. GRADE

Tour dates:
09.28.14 - Bristol, UK - Off The Page
10.03.14 - Barreiro, Portugal - Out.Fest
10.04.14 - Madrid, Spain - Villamanuela Festival
10.18.14 - Wroclaw, Poland - Avant Art Festival
11.13.14 - London, UK - Electrowerkz
11.21.14 - Utrecht, Netherlands - Le Guess Who? Festival
11.22.14 - Bern, Switzerland - Saint Ghetto Festival
11.23.14 - Kortrijk, Belgium - Sonic City
12.07.14 - Olomouc, Czech Republic - Paf

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "TRIDENT"

WATCH
by C MONSTER · September 30, 2014

Nobody knows what you're up to, Dean Blunt. There's nothing that really matters to anyone about YOU but the music being made under the Dean Blunt or Hype Williams names. You do JUST FINE with mystery in the music world being created throughout these past few releases. Dunno anything about this "*50 CENT / TRIDENT" 12" / OCT*, but exactly, right? I pre-ordered Black Metal. I assume one or both these songs will be on there. And EVERYBODY is itching for that new-wave reclamation of "black" and/or "metal." Mostly just hyped on the incentive of there being a totally new 12-inch to shelve next to *MERSH*. We'll see. Otherwise, just enjoy the linger Blunt provides via slow-pulse drone with patiently plucked guitar work into the click-squeak beat and personal (??) lyrical content; raw — it's all raw, always.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "Trident 2"

LISTEN
by SAMUEL DIAMOND · October 10, 2014

@jesuschrist3000ADHD's "Trident 2" features the allusive, if no longer as elusive, Dean Blunt channeling his inner Linton Kwesi Johnson, that is, offering up spoken word reports on London yoot.

Yet, where Johnson composed dub poems set to music produced by others, Blunt seems to have simply recited excerpts from an article over more than eight minutes of (possibly) original music. Fair enough.

To be more specific, "Trident 2" purports to tell the story behind "Trident," the b-side to Blunt's single, "50 Cent," off his upcoming Black Metal LP, due out November 4 on Rough Trade. Two days later, on November 6, the performance artist formerly known as Roy Nnawuchi will (supposedly) be doing a show at The Studio at Webster Hall in New York, with another gig booked at Jewel's Catch One in Los Angeles on November 7. Jet lag be damned.

Dean Blunt teases *Black Metal* with a visio/aisling/statement, plays both coasts this week

News

by JRODRIGUEZ6 · November 3, 2014

Dean Blunt, ever the lovable hellion, has done it again. As you already know, *Black Metal* is out tomorrow via Rough Trade, his first label-backed release since last year's *The Redeemer* (one of our favorite albums of 2013). But as if that weren't enough, he has now put out a statement to tease the LP — a hallucinatory piece he uploaded to archive.org, which basically amounts to this in written form:

https://youtu.be/aF2k3EBkFYo

I'm not even going to try to sum up what the text file touches upon, but "I'm not here to put smiles on peoples faces, I'm here to SPEND, and blaze all races" is a pretty representative quote. Add a rogue Daniel Lopatin reference ("How to break a brick? Point Never"), a list of (not-so)-tongue-in-cheek "excuses" in case his album flops — the album's already befuddled a few critics with its abundance of Sarah Records-esque guitar riffs — a whole lot of sentimental evisceration (?!¿), and a couple of Beyoncé and Wu-Tang Clan verses, and you still haven't got a clue. So why don't you just go read the whole thing yourself?

https://ia802809.us.archive.org/8/items/BlackMetal/Black%20Metal.pdf

And as if all that weren't enough either, Blunt will be playing two shows this weekend, in what is nothing short of a bi-coastal marathon: he'll be in New York on Friday and Los Angeles on Saturday. I saw him in Barcelona last Friday; he still had the (infamous) Redeemer tour bodyguard in tow, but was also joined by a sax player and (presumably) Joanne Robertson. He did the usual bit of stepping down the stage to play 15 minutes of noise, but also dropped a couple of tracks from *The Redeemer* among a whole lot of *Black Metal* songs, and finished it all with a lights-out stare down with the audience that went on for what felt like some very angry five minutes. Trust me, this something you do not want to miss. Check the dates below:

11.06.14 - New York, NY - The Studio at Webster Hall
11.07.14 - Los Angeles, CA - Jewel's Catch One

Black Metal is out tomorrow on Rough Trade.

~~~~~ ALBUM REVIEW ~~~~~

Dean Blunt

Black Metal

[Rough Trade; 2014]

by SIMON CHANDLER

●●●●◐

STYLES: black metal, post-colonial music
OTHERS: the white man

Here's a thought: what if Dean Blunt has been playing so hard to get all these years, not because he's some jealously private individual who doesn't want every Tom, Dick, and Sally knowing who he really is, but because he himself doesn't know who he really is? What if the secret when it comes to Blunt is that there is no secret? What if he's been wearing masks all this time because masks are the only thing available to him?

Then maybe he'd record something like *Black Metal*. Departing from the "narcotized R&B" and "bargain-basement soul" of last year's *The Redeemer*-*Stone Island* one-two punch, as well as the "comatose hip-hop" of 2012's *The Narcissist II*, *Black Metal* has Blunt masquerading under the "dead white tropes" of reverb-washed folk, starlit Americana, and post-ish indie rock, only to change into the dead black tropes of urbanite dub, anti-social electronica, and starkly ambient grime. But if it would be all-too easy to charge him yet again with artistic tomfoolery and arch self-consciousness, there's a newfound purpose to his dilettantism, one that invests the album with more weight than anyone had any right to expect.

But where does this "weight" come from? Well, to give a little historical context, it's been more than 60 years since Frantz Fanon published *Black Skin, White Masks*, and still communities of African descent are quixotically attempting to avoid discrimination and all the psychological/social/political fallout that comes with it by appropriating the cultural signifiers of their oppressors. In a recent interview with Rinse FM, Blunt declared himself of the opinion that the appropriation by black people of "existing white images […] is not actually really progressive." This might sound a tad rich coming from someone who up until now has more or less forged his entire musical career on the basis of appropriation, yet people can change, and they can realize that borrowing white iconography and positioning yourself as the black version of Elvis or Kurt Cobain inadvertently affirms the same unjust prioritization of white people over black you're trying to subvert. Which is why Blunt has eschewed the blatant Stravinsky and Pentagram larceny for *Black Metal* and opted instead for a subtler mix of sampled-unsampled instrumentation, as if having realized that by extensively reproducing the products of a repressive white system, you can't help but fall into the trap of confirming this regime as something worth reproducing.

This explains a fleet opener like "LUSH," which tempers Big Star's "For You" with jangly melodics and optimistic strings. In amongst its beatific swooping, Blunt chimes in with the half-cautious verse, "*Stay out of it/ And everything you see/ Stay out of it/ And everything you hear,"* possibly warning us not to perpetuate a society of stereotypes, prejudices, and suppression by engaging with it on its own terms. Similarly plush noises are heard on "50 CENT," exploiting washy, floating guitars to tranquilizing effect and sporting an angelic turn from now-regular collaborator Joanne Robertson. At first, it's almost a shock to hear such a run of benign lullabies on a Dean Blunt record, what with the acoustic dolor of "BLOW" and the open skies of "100" extending the pacifying melancholia into the next couple of tracks, but unsurprisingly they're all permeated and deepened by a lingering unease, a suspicion that something's not quite right.

The source of this disquiet isn't immediately apparent, but at the halfway point, *Black Metal* commences to shed its echoing highway folk, transforming into a barely recognizable chain of nocturnal post-dub and inhospitable electronic skree. It's in this latter half that Blunt seems to adopt something of a stereotyped persona, with the sax-smattered grind of "HUSH" annotated by such caricatures of aggression as "*Your batty's so hot"* and "*To all the niggas that knew me/ Sue me,"* and with the beautifully austere soundscaping of "Grade" featuring the steel-voiced couplet, "*Who's hot tonight?/ Who's girl wanna get picked up tonight?"* By dint of this stylistic about-face, the album forms what is essentially a dyad, and if Blunt's pre-game briefings with the likes of Rinse FM and *The Wire* are anything to go by, such a dyad represents the two opposing kinds of roles available to black people in a post-colonial, post-slavery, post-civil rights, and supposedly "post-black" world.

Because, on the one hand, the serenely wistful opening half finds Blunt — qua "the black man" — losing his formerly intractable distinctiveness in homogenized fingerpicking and balladeering, while on the other, the bullish closing half finds him magnifying those typecasted idiosyncracies that for half a decade now have kept him on the margins. This mirrors the dilemma faced by so many "liberated" black communities today: either assimilate into wider society and lose whatever identity you may have once possessed, or cleave onto this identity and persist in your persecuted role as the mysterious and

misrepresented Other. Either way, you end up being pigeonholed and stripped of individuality and uniqueness, and accordingly, *Black Metal* focuses itself around the lostness and alienation that stems from this predicament. References to an inability to be found or rediscovered are rife: "*You never saw me"* ("LUSH"); "*She got a new nigga/ Now he can't be found"* ("50 CENT"); "*Ain't nobody gonna find me"* ("BLOW"); "*I'm dying to meet you"* ("100"); "*I'm not who I'm meant to be"* ("PUNK"). And even when Blunt is ostensibly addressing someone else, there's always the lingering suspicion that he's in fact having a conversation only with himself. This would account for the stripped-down and comfortably numb "MOLLY & AQUAFINA," where he regretfully sings,"*Because you'll never be/ The one I want you to be/ Because I know that person is me,"* and where the resulting effect is one of perfect isolation and desertion.

Coupled with the hazy sonics of the gentler half and the darkened tones of the bleaker half, these nods to absence and estrangement furnish a picture of Blunt as someone adrift, rootless, stranded blindly in a world where only falsity and fake personae are available. Even when he disrobes himself of the gentility of filmy guitar melodies and Ms. Robertson's dulcet throat, his prospects don't improve that much, since the pulsing drum machines of a "MERSH" and the chaotic electro-squall of a "COUNTRY" all unfold within the territory of the clichéd Rude Boy. "MERSH" contains a series of matter-of-fact boasts about drug consumption, while the gloriously retrofuturist "GRADE" has Blunt declaring, "*Look at me, look at me/ Bad man wanna be me."* What's significant about these instances is that Blunt himself criticizes the kind of one-dimensional character they evoke earlier in the album, specifically via "50 CENT" and its line, "*All my niggas who think they're real/ If you know how I feel/ Never mess with explosives, yeah."* More significant still is that this criticism helps reveal *Black Metal* as a work with the mission of questioning the identities that are foisted on people in general and black people in particular. Even the fact that it has songs called "PUNK" and "COUNTRY" that in no way approximate the punk and country genres is a testament to its later rebellious streak, which refuses to passively accept the pre-given forms/roles others want us to accept and which recognizes that the only authentic stance is perhaps the one that's aware of the inauthenticity of all stances.
This would make sense of the album's centerpiece, which ironically is the decentered, sprawling "Forever." Here, shellshocked pianos, winding sax, journeying guitar, and an incorporeal Robertson all interleave without global coordination, foggily crisscrossing in the assertion that the refusal to assume a readymade identity is tantamount to condemning yourself to meander eternally in a directionless limbo. The piece isn't without its subtle coalescences and intensifications, such as the gradually solidifying chord progression that materializes after seven minutes, but these all pass in and out of existence independently of each other, never consolidating into a unity for fear of being integrated into the mainstream and becoming yet another one of those dead white tropes. The flipside of this aversion is "X," an ambient floe of airy electronics, liquid noodling, and brooding piano filigrees that together insinuate that if black communities want to avoid being exploited and expropriated, they're going to have to remain undefined, indeterminate, and liminal, cut off from the flow of civilization.

But this isn't to say Blunt is completely effaced beneath ossified conventions and alienating noise, since if there's one threadbare link between his past selves and the shadowy Babylon of *Black Metal*, it's the steadfast presence of women. In amongst the posturing, pretending, and prevarication, they stand as the one beacon of constancy and truth in his world, which is perhaps why the breakup charted

in *The Redeemer* et al. was so catastrophic for him, since it removed the only thing in his life that had any purity or authenticity. Within the plaintive wandering of "MOLLY & AQUAFINA" and its dripping minor chords, he sings, "*Riding through these streets/ I'm strapped up with my Nina/ So I don't worry about nothing,"* its dream-wearied lilt suggesting that the dangers of coercive social structures are nullified by his proximity to someone with whom he can be more than a mere type. And even though for the majority of the album, such women serve as barely dignified props for one of his inauthentic masks, they also offer him the promise of an authentic face, a promise he chases in the ethereal streaming of "Heavy," where he sings after an elusive woman with the lyrics, "*I haven't seen that girl/ So what about her?/ Guess I never knew that girl/ What about her?"*

Black Metal provides a few other faint glimmers of hope for self-actualization. In closer "GRADE," amidst bleak trails of sax and harsh tides of *Blade Runner* synth, Blunt sends a message to himself and anyone else in a similarly estranged situation. It reads, "*You're not a rerun/ Not just another one/ You're a new friend/ You just began."* Despite there being a possibility that these stolidly delivered words are something his "bad man" persona would offer as reassurance to an unsuspecting female, it would surely be much healthier to regard them as a pep talk, since not only do they have relevance for every person of African descent who's ever had to abandon their better selves for the sake of fitting in, but they also offer strength to the rest of the human race, because we're all pressured into becoming reruns at one point or another in our lives. And hopefully, after all the hype has settled down, the defiance of *Black Metal* will help us resist these pressures for a long time to come.

2014 Favorite Music Releases

35

Dean Blunt

Skin Fade

[Self-Released]

Skin Fade opened with a line from a black activist addressing "the white man," slyly truncated and repeated to sound both scolding and self-mocking. It was Blunt's post-post-breakup album, and his gift for inventing new forms was nicely caramelized: "Whip" and "Lush" pulled James Ferraro sass down into a minor key; on "Skin Fade" and "Roll These Trees for the G's at the Back," crisp-as-apples beats suddenly gave way, respectively, to a bruised horn sequence and rainy-day Satie piano — like a mood suddenly going dark. Joanne Robertson gave expression to Blunt's soft id with her chain-smoking-little-girl timbre; she was his Martina Topley-Bird. "Def" closed out the original release with Blunt's only vocal — clipped lines of bitter pimp poetry delivered with a military bark: "Who's hot tonight / Whose girl gonna get picked up tonight / It's just another one / Pull it back for another one / Then I'm gone, gone, gone, gone." The original mixtape dropped in January and abruptly disappeared. A "Deluxe

Edition" came in August, but it had been stepped on with fillers and oddities, and it omitted "Viper," possibly the most gorgeous four minutes of 2014 — Robertson as Liz Fraser as Deborah Kerr, wailing over church bells and trailing off into a lavender-smoke a cappella ending. –WATER

01

Dean Blunt

Black Metal

[Rough Trade]

Black Metal is a strange album to be vaunted at the top of a music list in 2014. In a year practically begging for catharsis (something TMT writers have never been shy about seeking out), Dean Blunt's obtuse, lopsided, and subdued album reached none of the heights set by countless previous entries on this list or even those of his own discography. The narrative-concrète transitions that made *The Narcissist II* and *The Redeemer* such breathtaking listens were entirely gone, and the heady concepts bubbling in the background prior to release arrived mostly muted. It wasn't all that clear whether altering a track choice, a vocal delivery, or even a playback speed would have made a significant difference in the sum total of the album's atmosphere or effect. You could call it Blunt's anti-climactic sophomore slump, a varied group of style experiments that didn't quite add up, songs you could either make a case for or toss aside, depending on your mood or whim.

So why did *Black Metal* end up here at #1? Well for one thing, maybe in 2014 we didn't really need another slap in the face from art to awaken us to the darkness and anxiety of our times. Maybe we get enough of those reminders already: new real-life horror stories popping up daily; new calls for urgent change and urgent preservation from people we know and respect, with each persuasive viewpoint taking a wider and more balanced consideration of the world than the last; anything the public fitfully deems "important" instantly subject to hyperbolic praise, relentless venom, or total dismissal from one's optimized newsfeed — the same fate. Maybe what we needed this year was something that just stayed the fuck out of it.

But while it's true that Dean Blunt is an "arch conceptualist," gleefully arranging and suggesting and then disappearing, it's equally true that his process operates in total opposition to what's going on in, say, a concept album, where the doors are tightly shut. *Black Metal* mocked our eagerness to suspend disbelief and find pure truth in cutting metaphors, instead presenting any one of its elements (packaging, genre, instrument, sound) in more or less the same way it appeared in "real life" — its materiality self-evident and indivisible but also a thing of endless permutations, open-ended and multifaceted, illuminating to consider and reconsider in different lights and states of consciousness, enriching to follow the rabbit trail of shifting context and watch mountainous connected truths form in tectonic "friction over the nonfiction." But it would be absurd — an obscenity — to then turn around and seek resolution as a "final step" to understanding, as if halting that motion entirely were ideal. This sudden turning away in the name of "empathy" would surely be just another tool of the narcissist.

Instead, what could be carried lightly through the album (and beyond) was the modest concept that everything is everything, the words in a book calling for human progression as present as the bottle of Moët anonymously smashed over its reader's head. Here, *Black Metal* itself became "just another one" in the multitude yet beautiful in its many reflections of other things, ground to a halt with "no other place to go" yet constantly on the move, zipping past cultural tombstones that were once directional signposts. "70s" drum samples and "80s" guitar samples entwined with "90s" guitar strumming and "00s" microphone clarity, not in an attempt to dissolve boundaries, but to find stronger, wider emotional expressions through seemingly incongruent combinations, disparate musics unhurriedly crossing both sides of this racial dyad in lyrical ellipses, our vocabulary to describe these meetings now sounding like jammed weapons or clammy handwringing.
If the work of the artist is, as Yoko Ono said, to "change the value of things," and the events of this year kept painfully stacking one on top of another, *Black Metal* inspired by traveling along a separate axis, refusing to aid in its own constriction, working to "keep it going on" in a fuller dimensionality, scraping the price tags off anything being guarded as private property and slapping them back down where instinct led, with "NOISE" not so hard to imagine now as a form of "COUNTRY" "ARTIST" returned to the "AUDIENCE" "TRANSPARENCY" achieved through "OPACITY" –SQUEO

2015

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "WAR REPORT"

LISTEN

by JESSIE JEFFREY DUNN ROVINELLI · January 29, 2015

There's a new Dean Blunt track out entitled "WAR REPORT," and you know how these things go. It was posted on that SoundCloud page he keeps using and it'll probably be deleted in a few days to a week. But you know how these things go: you love the web, and this song is pretty "pop" as far as these things go, yet Dean's still pretty "chilled." You breathe the web now, or at least you're trying to merge it with your molecular structure, but that's starting to sound pretty cliché and there's still a lot of other stuff out there. "Keys to city," he keeps saying, but cities are getting pretty liminal. I'm going to die soon enough and I'm not super stoked about that, but that's another cliché.

See Dean Blunt live on W. 23rd in NYC on Thursday February 12.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “WAR REPORT”

WATCH

by SQUEO · February 13, 2015

Last night in NYC, Dean Blunt staged a brief performance called “WAR REPORT” at the Off Vendome gallery space. Today, Sex Magazine premiered a video of the performance. In it, a man dressed in blue military fatigues (not Dean Blunt, notably) sits at a table enveloped in fog and reads a script/text written by Blunt, with battlefield sounds distantly playing in the background. Like *Black Metal* (the PDF), “War Report” is a monologue of sorts that’s both direct and of extremely uncertain and shifting origin/voice… some of it seems linked to Blunt’s thoughts on cultural assimilation that he’s given in interviews, other bits seem cribbed from the muddy self-worth philosophizing of someone like Popa Wu… but things are obviously being said here, and they’re being said to whoever is showing up for a Dean Blunt performance in NYC on February 12, 2015.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “100”

WATCH

by C MONSTER · February 19, 2015

“100” is the fourth track on Dean Blunt’s last LP *Black Metal* (TMT Review), and it was the number that drew me completely into the conflicting dichotomy the album began possessing both audibly and inside of me. Impatience is a bitch, and driving ‘round, (potentially) getting lost in whatever neighborhood is super irritating, but if you’re “*Dying to meet*” someone, it’ll feel like an eternity of frustration. Yet, Blunt (classically) keeps his fucking cool. Not only vocally composed, but visually on camera, as well. And stocked with muscle at the trigger, ain’t nothing stopping Blunt from his pursuit of passion. Ever.

Yet, ever since our boii Papaya went up in NYC to witness the War Report, gripping a BUNCH of written-out “War Report” sheets Blunt provided for free, I’ve been on a rampage reading it. Mostly because my phone got stolen in the gym locker room and I only got “War Report” to read. Though, if I followed the OBVIOUS lead, I’d be another white boy caught copying a stack of these at work, having left one in the Xerox machine, and eventually getting shit canned. But it’s in my pocket, kept safe, and will soon be housed in *Black Metal*.

But it’s official: Dean Blunt is a Tiny Mix Taper. The one-two-three: 1) Quote at the beginning of his work, 2) Continuing to flourish art while trying to keep nonchalantly private (SEE: Papaya, Mr. P, Bort, Squeo, Mukqs, Birkut, Weaver, Max Power, Monet Maker, etc.), and 3) We all wear flight jackets and have HENCH drive our Bentley coupes.

OH! THIS SHIT TOO… [Dean Blunt wins NME award, sends some guy to collect it]

Dean Blunt releases 30-page book of receipts called *Cîroc Boyz*

News

by MR P · April 28, 2015

Dean Blunt, who released our favorite album of 2014, is now releasing what's sure to be our favorite collection of receipts of 2015. *Cîroc Boyz : vol 1* is a 30-page book that documents "excessive expenses made in the most popular VIP clubs in the hip hop scene" and is available now through *NERO Magazine*. Samples on *NERO*'s site include receipts with totals of $40k, $66k, and a whopping $156k.

The book is ostensibly part of a larger project that Blunt has been unraveling over the last several years, including gallery performances like "White Flight," all-night dance parties like "Ciroc Boyz @ Orleans," and one-off events like "Urban" (which featured, among other things, men in Cîroc shirts walking around as Blunt played a DVD of comedian Kevin Hart).

Cîroc Boyz : vol 1 is out now via *NERO* and is limited to 500 copies. I was planning to embed a YouTube video called "cîroc boyz vol.1," but it has already been taken down (no surprise). Instead, here's a track called "Urban," off Hyperdub's *10.3* comp from 2014.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "On Wine, Hashish and Molly"

WATCH

by MR P · May 3, 2015

Dean Blunt has taken to YouTube to drop some Earth Wisdom. It's a psychoactive trip that I would prefer not to spoil, but I should note that I opened my eyes around 11 minutes in and realized that I had forget to finish the end tail of a blink. I had actually forgotten to open my eyes. I realized that, when my eyes were closed and I just absorbed the energies and sounds that were filling the room by this track, the music was a lot more enjoyable. My friends were crawling all over and engaging in all sorts of odd and hilarious antics. My friend Squeo had an M&M suit on, and was gallantly screaming some Chinx Drugs lyrics. The very visualization made me laugh harder than I've ever laughed before.

I had terrible cotton mouth. But that tap water tasted fucking amazing. It was like liquid gold.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "†"

LISTEN

by C MONSTER · May 26, 2015

That classic dry beat, bounce-to-rumble bass, staggering melodious guitar, and distant sax: yeah, we know "†" is you already, Dean Blunt. You ain't even gotta start up that lyrical hate, but we'll hear your transgressions because… you know. And he does it again: a shtick akin to (obviously) *Black Metal* and *The Act of Killing*. Oh, and Shellac's "Prayer to God." But that is, he's just divulging further into the art of portraying the obvious, obliviously/neutrally. *Oh… oh SONG is your pray? Ja. Ja. There is that prayer!* :)

It's tight that Dean is always going into modalities and stylings of his musical work, but sometimes it becomes repetitive, and "†" could have been [and probably is] a d-side off *Black Metal* and nobody would've even blinked at the thought of comparing it to any of his other works. Yet, I digress. "†" is not a new beginning for Dean Blunt, but possibly a sending-off to his last-year musical aesthetic, honing in a whole new wave of creation the world will be prepared for 20 years from now. But luckily your good pals at TMT got your back for the scoop and show. So listen to the new Dean Blunt track "†" below, and pray along:

Dean Blunt drops zip of unreleased music called *Babyfather* through Hyperdub

News

by MR P · May 29, 2015

Six things:

1. Hyperdub has just dropped a zip of eight tracks from Dean Blunt.
2. The collection is titled *Babyfather*.
3. Hyperdub says it's of unreleased music from 2014.
4. We've heard some of the tracks before, like "Son" and "War Report."
5. But they all sound fucking great. (No surprise.)
6. Grab the zip here.

Babyfather tracklist:

01. UV
02. SON
03. BLOW 2
04. RACHEL CUT
05. WAR REPORT
06. COCO
07. DIESEL
08. GASS

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “stalker 9”

WATCH

by MR P · July 15, 2015

Quick, hide. Dean Blunt’s stalking again. And he’s been doing it for exactly 4 years, 5 months, and 13 days now.

Stalking is unwanted or obsessive attention by an individual or group toward another person. Stalking behaviors are related to harassment and intimidation and may include following the victim in person or monitoring them. The word stalking is used, with some differing meanings, in psychology and psychiatry and also in some legal jurisdictions as a term for a criminal offense.
According to a 2002 report by the US National Center for Victims of Crime, “virtually any unwanted contact between two people that directly or indirectly communicates a threat or places the victim in fear can be considered stalking,” although in practice the legal standard is usually somewhat stricter.

♫♪ Babyfather (Dean Blunt) & Arca - “Meditation”

LISTEN

by MR P · October 20, 2015

Dean Blunt, who dropped a zip of unreleased music earlier this year as Babyfather, is back with a track called “Meditation,” this time produced with Arca. I’m crying.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “available”

WATCH

by C MONSTER · November 11, 2015

Lots of strains . Call or text for more info.Fat bags.Fat budz.Excellent bud.Call or text 07931066137.”

Well, what the FUCK are you waiting for: meet him in person! (Maybe)… Also, scope the slight movements in this WATCH video on YouTube around the 0:06, 0:24, 0:52, 1:01, and 1:16 parts of “available.” Lezkettit!

♫♪ Dean Blunt - *UK2UK*

LISTEN

by MR P · November 14, 2015

Special alert: Dean Blunt just dropped a new release titled *UK2UK*. The half-hour mix takes us through nine tracks (one of which features Arca), offering some of the most striking fashion design: smooth silky fabric, regular fit, round neckline, feathers and organza detail on chest and back. It's for people who want that old feeling without the dizziness, lack of bodily control, and distinct lack of that feeling from chasing the dragon; for those walking the same streets as Sherlock in two days; for those having issues with the Royal Mail, pupils pinned, nose itching, and receptors buzzing with delight. Unfortunately, the server is down, there's a temporary hiccup in the Tor network, and you're actually in the jail cells chilling with the beggars.

01. bangin lemon
02. back2mine
03. cookies
04. ESCROW
05. pagans ft arca
06. young blood
07. bright
08. breddas
09. fonda
10. exit wounds ft dj escrow

2016

♫♪ Babyfather (Dean Blunt) - *Platinum Tears*

LISTEN

by MR P · January 31, 2016

UPDATE (8:30 AM): Blunt updated his SoundCloud with guest spots ("ft dj escrow, db, t, mandy, gassman") and the tracklist, which you can view below.

Dean Blunt never left, but he's back anyway, this time with a new Babyfather mix titled *Platinum Tears*. This is some incredibly raw, trunk-rattling shit, a sticky strain for the devoted.

Turn it up. Close your eyes. Now open 'em.

Everything looks all fucked up now, doesn't it?

[dead link]
01. Bruiser
02. Platinum Tears
03. Breeze
04. Militant
05. Positive Flow
06. Deeper
07. Millennial Rain
08. Freeze

Dean Blunt's Babyfather to drop new album on Hyperdub

News
by MR P · February 18, 2016

"
1000's of happy customers."

– Hype Swegway™

After releasing a mixtape, zip, and scattered songs here and there, Babyfather have just announced a new album. And yes, apparently Babyfather consists of more than just TMT sweetheart Dean Blunt. The album's called *BBF hosted by DJ Escrow* and includes collaborations with Arca and Mica Levi. It's out April 1 on the incredible Hyperdub.

As the great drug lord Idris Elba put it: "Without a doubt, I guarantee that it will be in rotation at every club, at every party and coming out the speakers of every car …this makes me proud to be British." As Elba really put it re: Dean Blunt:

> It's clearly avant garde, and he's a musician, no doubt. And I heard his other stuff as well, but it was just a bit too experimental for my tastes. It quickly turned into background noise for me. I didn't find myself being drawn into what would happen next. I get that he's brave, and I love artists who are brave. He's clearly totally like "this is my shit, and this is my sound," I love that and more people need to be like that. But I feel like there isn't enough to keep me switched on. To me, this song just sounds like a loop with talking over it, and I tuned out.
> I would never shut him down, because I think it's great he has the balls to make this. But I still think listeners deserve the right to have something in there that really turns them on. I could make a whole album like this on my iPad. Although if I did, everyone would tell me to fuck right off.

Peep the tracklist below, followed by a handful of dates.

BF Hosted by DJ Escrow tracklist:
01. Stealth Intro
02. Greezebloc
03. Meditation ft Arca
04. Escrow
05. Shook
06. Motivation
07. PROLIFIC DEAMONS
08. Platinum Cookies
09. Esco Freestyle
10. Stealth
11. God Hour ft Mica Levi
12. N.A.Z
13. Juice
14. HELLS ANGLES
15. Killuminatti
16. Escrow 2
17. Deep ft Arca
18. Escrow 3
19. The Realness
20. Flames
21. Snm ft Arca
22. Stealth Outro
23. Message

Dates:
04.02.16 - The Hague, NL - Rewire Festival
04.08.16 - Milan, IT - ClubtoClub Festival
04.15.16 - Gent, BE - Vooruit
05.05.16 - Krems, AU - Donau Festival

♫♪ Babyfather (Dean Blunt) - “Breeze Freestyle” / “Platinum Tears Freestyle”

LISTEN

by MR P · January 27, 2016

Dean Blunt, as Babyfather, has dropped a couple freestyles ahead of his hot16 event with artist and autodidactic nutritionist Nina Cristante. Not sure if the Foxtons Mini Cooper replica has anything to do with it, but the event takes place for a full month starting tomorrow (January 28) at Copenhagen’s YEARS art gallery.

As a recent YouTube description put it:
[illegible] ONE [illegible] 2016 [illegible] ONE [illegible] Night [illegible] ONE [illegible] CROWD[illegible]
[illegible] ONE [illegible] FEELING [illegible] ONE [illegible] EXPERIENCE

UPDATE (11:50 AM): Dean Blunt also has an exhibition from January 28 - February 28 at the artist-run Cubitt gallery in London.

~~~~~ ALBUM REVIEW ~~~~

Babyfather

by SOE JHERWOOD

Platinum Tears

[Self-Released; 2016]

STYLES: comedown, memory recall, streets
OTHERS: DJ Escrow, Dean Blunt, T, Mandy, Gassman

It's 5:00 AM, and the curtains are drawn. A familiar scene: empty canisters, burst balloons. There are questions lingering in the collective mind of the room, akin to the heady aftertaste of K-backwash and cheap vodka. When does the night end? When does the day begin? Will I ever be the same again? Can I ever be the same again?

Eyelids hang heavy, yet everyone is present, awake, if not entirely conscious. The resident SoundCloud DJ has fucked off back to his place, leaving the same mix to loop over and over. Dead stares, broken glasses, lost keys. Just another weekend.

The mind's eye opens somewhat in those hours of altered states, as we sojourn into our back-passages and Inner Citadels. It's no longer about when, if, you next open your eyes, but the lonely moments in

between. The incidentals unfurl before you, as if every instance has been leading up to this sullen, bleary-eyed gathering; as if this were somehow your calling.
Was it ever really that simple?

Dean Blunt's *Platinum Tears* brings it full circle — the people, the places, the corporate experiences — and renders it as the cavernous, blown-out lacuna of a subwoofer in the trunk. For the most part, it keeps it Real, a gassed, hard-hitting "bruiser;" at turns, it also abounds with "positive flow," a Swarovski diamond in the frozen roughage. It's a smear on the glass, a blurred refraction of a flickering streetlight. It encourages you to go "deeper" into the coke-residual recesses of your mind's chopping board.

Think of the old school photo on your parents' mantlepiece, adorned with the grins of children with nothing to lose. The tendrils of reality encroach upon the sun-bleached, time-worn faces, as you recall who they were. How many of them are now babymums, Babyfathers too? You remember the playground taunts: "BMW, black man's willy." How it all comes back around. Now, there's "Black Dick" on the table. It's a violent cycle.

Think of that childhood friend, the one who was keen on sport — he's probably in that very photo — and the tenuous link you still share. His number's in your phone. You remember the text he sent the other week, immortalized in liquid crystal: "Lots of strains . Call or text for more info.Fat bags.Fat budz.Excellent bud." You haven't seen him for a little while, and he doesn't answer your calls or messages anymore. Perhaps it's time to delete that contact and fear the worst.

Think of that night in Budapest, jostling with the destitute, the abandoned, the unwelcome. In that shitty club, you swore you recognized her face. It's somewhere on that photo again. That's it; she sat next to you that day. Your first crush, maybe. You never did see her again after you finished school, and now you're in the same city, at the very same venue, the incongruent sounds of foreign chatter and Big Room ringing in your ears. Not that you ever approached her, though. Confrontation was never your thing. You stumbled about on those repressed memories, and you walk and walk, somewhere, anywhere, through the dead streets, guided by the shimmering lights of the Gucci and Louis Vuitton storefronts up ahead.

You're back in the moment. Your moment. Maybe there is clarity in all of this. Maybe this is life's eternal return, pre-destined to wear the same clothes, do the same drugs, interact with the same people, read the same books. All that changes is the town, city, state.

Waking up in the morning, you cry *Platinum Tears* in the shower, trapped within the ever-closing walls of a heavy, heavy comedown. It happens to the best of us. A quick escape; without so much as saying goodbye, you step onto the train, knowing that normalcy and mundanity is a stop away. There's something you can't quite shake as you take your seat. What was that mix again? It could've only been roughly 20 minutes looping on and on into the night, and yet it never lost any of its initial luster. It sounded familiar but detached, somehow encapsulating the worn limbs and tired souls of the room.

It spoke to you, as clichéd as that sounds. It was a street fable, a sensory prayer — an uncanny glimpse from the outside-in. You realize you may never actually get to hear it again, let alone listen to it sober. But like that school picture, it has already left its lucid imprint upon your frazzled neurons.

♫♪ Dean Blunt's Babyfather - "Sting freestyle"

WATCH

by MR P · February 27, 2016

Dean Blunt has a reputation for keeping us at arm's length, but our role as listeners can be just as inscrutably evasive, scrolling and tabbing and clicking through digital wastelands with non-committal, privatized ease. So, it's in these moments of Blunt-ian confrontation, placed among the otherwise faceless stream of surreal computer art and concealed physicalities, where we can bask in his overt nakedness, to use the screen as a temporal gateway to Blunt's own body-position.

"Sting freestyle" continues Blunt's beautiful string of freestyles (scare quotes optional). The track, which features a Kanye interpolation, is not on Babyfather's upcoming album.

Check out a live performance of the song above, and look for Babyfather's *BBF hosted by DJ Escrow* April 1 on Hyperdub.

♫♪ Dean Blunt's Babyfather - "Shook" / "Motivation"

WATCH

by MR P · March 28, 2016

Don't panic. Dean Blunt's Babyfather are releasing their official debut this Friday on Hyperdub, and they just dropped a video for it. The album's called *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow*, and it's fucking brilliant IMO. Two of its best tracks, "Shook" and "Motivation," are featured back-to-back on the album, and they get the video treatment here. Check it out above.

In related news, Dean Blunt uploaded nine instrumental tracks to SoundCloud last week, but unfortunately there's only one still available: a collaboration with Micachu called "Blackchat Dub." Listen while you can.

If you're scrambling for more rarities, buy this limited Babyfather shirt and wear it everywhere.

You hear the sirens?

~~~~~ ALBUM REVIEW ~~~~

Babyfather

by MR P

BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow

[Hyperdub; 2016]

STYLES: kloser 2 god, Heavenly Reach, E8, rap
OTHERS: Kevin Hart, Jaja Soze, Gassman D, Lord Tusk, Arca

"*The state moves by stealth to gather information."*
– Nat Hentoff
"*I'm not British. I'm not British at all. The British told me that."*
– Dean Blunt

There's a sound that I can't hear. It's a high-frequency, around 17.4 kHz. I can't hear it because that frequency of sound (and anything above it) is typically only audible to people under 25. It's the result of a phenomenon called presbycusis, a term used for this progressive, age-related form of hearing loss.

In 2005, Howard Stapleton adopted this frequency for an invention he called The Mosquito, an ultrasonic alarm designed to "disperse unwanted youth gatherings" and "combat vandalism," as the company puts it. Because the sound is only audible to those under 25, UK business owners — including even McDonald's — can flick on The Mosquito alarm to repel potential vandals while retaining the patronage of the 25+ crowd who can't hear it. Adults are sneaky fucks.

But teenagers are sneaky fucks, too. Within a year, the sound was repurposed by teens as a ringtone called TeenBuzz. If they received a text in the classroom or at the dinner table, it'd emit the 17.4 kHz frequency. And no adult could hear it.

Dean Blunt is familiar with repurposing. For a recent art exhibition at the artist-run Cubitt Gallery in London, he hung a repurposed stock photo called "Business Colleagues Sitting at a Table Affectionately Smiling at Each Other," framed. The photo — tagged by Fotosearch with keywords like "only young adults," "multiethnic," and "african american ethnicity" — was slightly vandalized with spray paint in the bottom-left corner (which recalls the also-vandalized Foxtons Mini Cooper model cars that Blunt had sold earlier this year).

And playing throughout the exhibit? Not Dean Blunt, not Babyfather, not Hype Williams, not drone, ambient, or incidental music. It was the 17.4 kHz frequency, courtesy of none other than The Mosquito alarm, installed in a nearby cage with a Union Jack sticker on it.

Perhaps it's not surprising, then, that alarms and sirens, those piercing signifiers of emergency and surveillance, are given such prominence on *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow*, the debut album by Babyfather (ostensibly a trio of Dean Blunt, DJ Escrow, and Gassman D). But what *is* surprising is how they're treated. Typically when Blunt is repurposing something — whether it's a logo, brand, cultural phenomenon, or sound — it becomes flattened and redistributed in the vortex of his cut-and-paste, sketch-like aesthetic, with added value, added connotations, added nonsense either suffocating it until it can barely signify anymore or enlivening it to a degree that only our bodies can make sense of. Everything but the burden. But here, the sirens aren't flattened and redistributed; they just sound like the annoying, disruptive sounds that they are. As our host DJ Escrow puts it, "You hear the sirens, yeah? The sirens is a real ting. Man hear the sirens every fucking night. Man's tryna do my ting, and I hear the fucking sirens."

Where The Mosquito alarm uses ultrasonic violence to demarcate space, the kind of sirens here are designed to induce disorientation to exploit the mind's limitations and thresholds, to force itself oppressively upon bodies under the guise of security. *BBF*, in this light, becomes the tar in the streets patching up the effects of time, the new strain clouding the lungs, both a street fable and a sensory prayer. It becomes the story of that inner-city kid growing up with black skin, the redemption of that desperate class-based hustle, the surreptitious consequences of the violence in our language and in our actions and in our heads. It becomes the cases of champagne on the floor, the Styrofoam cups, the weed in the air, the balloon filling up with nitrous (presumably the first sound on *BBF*). It becomes the

pouring of liquor, not for your dead homies, but "*on your head."* It becomes the surveillance camera tracing movement, the degeneration of society and of the ear, the London borders, closed and inaccessible.

And, with much of Blunt's recent art and music influenced by his upbringing in Hackney ("Buy British" sloganeering, the London cityscape lit up like Christmas, UK flags plastered everywhere), *BBF* becomes "about" London as much as it is a product of it. But Blunt's interest in territory, in space, also plays out in more sensual ways. His live shows often manipulate space by clarifying it (house lights), smudging it (fog machines), and processing it (strobe lights, plays on darkness/lightness), with the extreme ends of his music — the sub-bass and the oppressive noise — finding their own physical embodiments. On *BBF*, this interest in space can be felt in the disjointed sighs between songs, in the lopsided interludes, even in Blunt's hyper-localized rapping. While his lexicon is coded, his syntax disconnected, and his sense-making sometimes inscrutable, Blunt's underlying style could perhaps be best described as spatial. His odd, pointed cadences are exacerbated by lateral entryways and long pauses between lines, with a stream of rap tropes and side-door slang finding unexpected expression in the crevices of its post-genre flexing. Blunt's not a master of wordplay, and he's certainly not trying to be a good technical rapper. But his flow, his delivery, is entrancing.

On "Motivation," Blunt raps, ""*Everybody's here when I get it/ But ain't nobody here when I hit it/ Forget it."* He then pauses for 20 seconds, before delivering the final line: "*You're never gonna get it, boy."*

It's only 20 seconds, but you can fit worlds in that gap.

"*The Ig Nobel Prizes honor achievements that make people LAUGH, and then THINK."*
– The Ig® Nobel Prizes
"*The best art has humor in it. You can't take yourself too seriously."*
– Dean Blunt

Let's talk about a dead guy.

In February 2010, British fashion designer and *enfant terrible* Alexander McQueen made headlines — for killing himself. He had consumed a lethal cocktail of drugs, slashed his wrists, and then hung himself. He was found dead by his housekeeper, with a nearby laptop showing search results for suicide information and a note scribbled on the back of a book (*The Descent of Man*) that read: "Look after my dogs. Sorry, I love you."

A week before his death, McQueen had taken to Twitter to announce the passing of his mother. His mental state was in question by the media, who based their suspicions on tweets like "why people ignore the ugly things in life but within this they are missing the beauty that lies under the rotten

fruit!!!!!!!!!!!!" and "from heaven to hell and back again, life is a funny thing. beauty can come from the most strangest of places even the most disgusting places."

Even more curiously for the media was a pair of tweets that referenced the same phrase. Days before his mother's death, McQueen cryptically tweeted "Hells Angels + Prolific Demons." After her death (and soon before his own), he offered a bizarre variation: "sunday evening been a fucking awful week but my friends have been great but now i have to some how pull myself together and finish with the […] HELLS ANGLES & PROLIFIC DEAMONS!!"

What many had thought was a disturbing hint of his suicidal thoughts was revealed a month later to be an allusion to his latest collection, one that was "imprinted with the angels of Sandro Botticelli and the demons of Hieronymus Bosch."

It was, in other words, just a reference.

But is a reference always "just" a reference? For Blunt, even a seemingly innocuous reference can bring about new worlds, new ways of feeling or understanding. His references take us through seemingly endless rabbit holes, pushing us to the far reaches of the internet (a.k.a. "nowhere"); and part of what makes Blunt's references so compelling is that they're often inexplicable, imagined gestures pointing to out-of-focus objects, destabilized concepts, and vague characterizations that are rarely ever explicitly politicized or explained. They exist not in a vacuum, but in suspension between worlds, between moods, between bodies. And in these suspended states, in these lingering moments of float-game/flesh-state elusions, exist dialectical opportunities for meaning and non-meaning.

Because, after all, what does it mean or not mean when *BBF* features song titles like "HELLS ANGLES" and "PROLIFIC DEAMONS"? What does it mean/not mean when a quote from Ronald "Slim" Williams about Rich Gang is altered in a press release to describe *BBF* and attributed to British actor Idris Elba? What does it mean/not mean when we find out that some of the album's primary lyrics ("*Don't panic"* and "*Shawty fell in love with a hustler,"* the latter of which opens the same verse on two back-to-back tracks) are actually from French Montana's "Don't Panic"? What does it mean/not mean when he's appropriating lyrics from Neil Young, Nas, and Bad Brains in the same song ("N.A.Z."), which may or may not be sung by Jstar Valentine? What does it mean/not mean when a sampled voice repeats "This makes me proud to be British" nearly 100 times on the opening track, one that's even reprised two more times on the album, as if the hollowed-out shell of a sentiment weren't already emptied of meaning?

I don't know exactly what it all means, but I also don't think it matters. What I do know is that when I hear Dean Blunt's music, I'm often at a loss for words — or at least at a loss for rational thinking. His music shakes my foundations, disrupts my preconceptions, plays with my ability to synthesize meaning. His music — which is actually sometimes other people's music — makes me trip on language itself, and that's one of the best things about him. Part of being a fan means accepting the possibility that you might not know what to think after hearing it — music for anyone who's ever said

“Wow, I have no idea what that was, but I think I loved it.” Genre here becomes irrelevant, the references as “random” as you want them to be, and the experience always indelible.

Not even Dean Blunt (which, as a reminder, isn’t even his real name) really matters as an “individual” artist in this generalized outline. Blunt seems to play with identity and mediums because it allows him to curate spaces and senses and references without the baggage of ego and a defined purpose, making him as much the fog enveloping the venue as the guy he sent to pick up his NME award, as much the distorting sound system as the man who read his war report. And yet, the dominant accusation is that Blunt is an aggressive prankster, which would then ultimately make us the “victims.” But maybe *we* are the aggressors, lashing out because we feel vulnerable in the challenging contexts that he builds, because we don’t know exactly how to react to his unique humor/satire/parodies, because we don’t fully understand what is meant by his obfuscated music, assuming anything is meant at all.

Which brings us, finally, to the even more enigmatic DJ Escrow, who plays a much larger role in driving what is “meant” by the album. He’s our host, but he’s no performative mixtape hype artist like DJ Holiday or DJ Scream or DJ V-Dub. He acts more like a DJ from a London pirate radio show, which itself connects the album to a network of unlicensed, black-run stations that have been instrumental in spreading “MOBO” (Music Of Black Origin) throughout the UK. Aside from two rapping moments, one in which he talks about how “basic” his flow is (“Platinum Cookies”) and the other during arguably the album’s beautiful apex (“Deep”), Escrow mostly exploits his role for extended philosophical monologuing on everything from self-responsibility and the rap game to street representation and unification, with “real-time” shout-outs to an unknown audience, London area-code drops, and a thick Caribbean patois, framing the music geographically and politically (“Fuck Trident, yeah? Fuck MI5, fuck MI6”) while acting as a conveyer of wisdom, a transmitter of information. Because, in its own oblique way, much of this album deals with the handling of information: the concealment of information (secrecy), the gathering of information (stealth), the access to information (security), the transmission of information (communication), the body of information (discourse).

But the human body is not simply a container for information, and all of Blunt’s projects have played to our body’s irreducible, complex terrain of desire and pleasure. It continues on *BBF* with more drifting aesthetics, arch poetics, and sensual appropriations that far overtake any thematic projections. Dwelling in any given Blunt-ian moment has never implied the sanctification of it, and he often ensures this by slipping in and slinking out before anything can fully congeal, preserved only in his disappearance. It can sometimes feel like a challenge, like a test, to willfully swim in a sea of obscure references and incoherence, but I think of it as an opportunity for multiple definitions, for thoughtful inquiry. Sure, maybe we could call *BBF* a commentary on private and public spaces, on access, on vandalism; maybe we could call it responsible street survival in the face of rhetorical politics, a critique of neocolonialism, the pushback against the coded battle of “war by other means.”

But I call it Heavenly Reach.

Babyfather has created this space for us. Detonating chests. Wrecking lungs. Popping veins. *BBF* may leave us with terrible cotton mouth, but the tap water tastes fucking amazing. It's like liquid gold. And I feel it in my chest now.

♫♪ Babyfather - live on Hyperdub's Rinse FM show

LISTEN

by MR P · April 11, 2016

Over the weekend, Babyfather was "live and direct" on Hyperdub's Rinse FM show, hosted by Scratcha DVA. Few things: (1) the Babyfather portion starts an hour in, with a short interview and then an extended live set; (2) DJ Escrow *is* a real person (for all the doubters out there); (3) brace yourself because there is a good amount of noise (called "war sound" by Escrow); and (4) Alexander McQueen wouldn't have been able to hear The Mosquito alarm at his age when he died.

In related news, Dean Blunt has another art exhibition coming up. It's called "Safe Space" and is happening at MAMA in Rotterdam. As MAMA puts it: "MAMA has been converted into a private screening room by UK artist Dean Blunt, with a daily unannounced film programme."

Bless. We need that.

♫♪ Babyfather - "Killuminatti"

WATCH

by MR P · May 6, 2016

The Don. Safe Spaces. The 34th degree of the Freemason click. Sandro Botticelli and the demons of Hieronymus Bosch. After the fire comes the rain, after pleasure there's pain. Even though we broke for the moment, we'll be ballin' again. Move without a sound, as we slide down, pistols in place.

"Another one."

"All you people just don't get it."

"I want to be Dean Blunt like how children wanna be Kanye."
– anonymous

Babyfather's debut album *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow* is out now on Hyperdub.

Dean Blunt might release a DVD tomorrow called *Queen of Camden*

News

by MR P · May 12, 2016

Dean Blunt just uploaded a new, noisy, stalker-ish video to YouTube. It appears to be the trailer for something called *Queen of Camden*, which might see release as soon as tomorrow, according to the YouTube description. It reads as follows:

> Dean Blunt : Queen of Camden
> DVD
> 13.5.16

Could it be the "black action hero slash UK stoner buddy movie" he mentioned in a recent interview with i-D?? I guess we'll find out soon enough. In the meantime, grab your favorite strain and check out the trailer:

[dead link]

Blunt's latest release comes from his Babyfather group, titled *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow*. His next art exhibition is called W44VEY and opens next Friday in London. For more info, check out the exhibition's also-noisy trailer here:

[dead link]

♫♪ Babyfather - "N.A.Z"

WATCH

by MR P · May 13, 2016

"*I have so many opinions about everything it just comes out during my music. It's a battle for me. I try not to be preachy. That's a real danger.*"
– Neil Young

"*Every generation witnesses atrocities. People in power try to fulfill prophecy.*"
– Nas

"*Living in times when things are slow people don't know where to go. Jah will always be there.*"
– Bad Brains

“___ is 3 minutes away from Hammersmith tube station and Bus garage.”

“N.A.Z” is off Babyfather’s debut album, *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow*. The video follows a trailer posted last night for a DVD by Dean Blunt called *Queen of Camden* (a.k.a Amy Winehouse), which is supposedly “out now.” Send us a link if you can track one down. (And if it’s a limited release, definitely send us a link first, wait for us to reply, then you can order. We’ll explain later.)

Meanwhile, look for Blunt’s new art exhibition next Friday in London. Trailer below.

♫♪ Babyfather - “Bubble”

LISTEN

by C MONSTER · May 16, 2016

Since our fearless leader is maxed-out on Babyfather — considering all these tracks keep getting deleted and NOBODY can find *Queen of Camden* — “bubble” pops in featuring unsolicited Mary J. Blige samples with DJ Escrow feeling it as a DJ first, but MCing on the side. What else is there? Have y’all been listening to *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow*? It’s like, I’ve actual repeat tracks for times of my weekday and sporadic weekends. “Shook” for when I’m a lil lit and driving down the street. “Motivation” prior to interviews. “Meditation” between work and picking up wifey.

Now, I can add “bubble” to that morning grind. Feel the filter Babyfather laxes out with synths. Get jacked on Mary J. Blige’s inspiring voice. Turn’t on them random Babyfather sounds. You can create a moment too:

[dead link]

♫♪ Dean Blunt - *SS16* [mix]

LISTEN

by MR P · June 16, 2016

“*Know me broken by my master*
Teach thee on child of love hereafter”
– Alice in Chains

“*How bad do you have to jack up a neighborhood before the neighborhood just says enough?”*
– Reginald Denny

Hash bars, cherry mash, and tinfoil tiaras. Fields of poppies, pearls and swine bereft of him and out like a sharp machine. *The Bashing of Reginald O. Denny*. I don't want to be here in your London Dungeon. All the little pigs have God — and only He can judge me. Yes, God between me and you. We won't take any shit, and we're not about to leave. So, who wants to fuck with us now?

Dean Blunt has just taken to SoundCloud to unload a new hour-long mix called *SS16*. Listen here while it lasts:

Dean Blunt's Babyfather announce fall tour, including North American dates

News

by MR P · August 8, 2016

With detonated chests, wrecked lungs, and popped veins, Dean Blunt's Babyfather project — which is now said to include DJ Escrow, Gassman, Triumph ALLAH, and Lady T — has announced a fall tour. The dates, which include a jaunt through North America, will see the group playing several festivals, including POP Montreal, Unsound, and Meakusma.

Dates are posted below. Get tix and get yourself kloser 2 god.

Meanwhile, Babyfather recently released another new track. This one, titled "Skywalker Freestyle (ft. Triumph ALLAH)," features a choice sample of Kate Bush's "Wuthering Heights," continuing a fine history of Kate Bush sampling from the likes of Daniel Lopatin, Burial, Mediafired, and Blunt himself. Babyfather's debut album, *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow*, is out now on Hyperdub. Feel it in your chest.

08.26.16 - Aarhus, DK Flux Festival
09.14.16 - New York, NY - Panther Room
09.15.16 - Detroit, MI - El Club
09.17.16 - Atlanta, GA - 787 Windsor
09.21.16 - Toronto, CA - The Velvet Underground
09.22.16 - Montreal, CA - POP Montreal
09.24.16 - Eupen, BE - Meakusma Festival
10.20-22.16 - Krakow, PL - Unsound Festival
10.28.16 - Manchester, UK - Soup Kitchen
10.29.16 - Bristol, UK - The Black Swan
10.03.16 - Athens, GR - Plissken Festival

♫♪ Babyfather - “Skywalker Freestyle”

WATCH

by MR P · August 26, 2016

> *I don’t think marching, listening to Kendrick Lamar on Oxford St., is really gonna solve it.*
>
> – Dean Blunt

As Babyfather step on (a presumably non-floating) stage today for Flux Festival in Denmark, the group has released a video for their new track, “Skywalker Freestyle.” It’s fucking good. Watch the video above, peep the upcoming dates for Babyfather’s tour here, and listen to *BBF*

In related news, Dean Blunt recently appeared as “Glenn Danzig” in an intriguing roundtable hosted by Boiler Room, where he talks Black Lives Matter, Dead Prez, Kendrick Lamar, and the black body. The whole thing’s worth watching, but Blunt’s main contribution comes at 1:11:23. View the full discussion below.
[dead link]

♫♪ Dean Blunt - “Acts Of Faith”

LISTEN

by MR P · September 13, 2016

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy catholic Church teaches, because in revealing them you can neither deceive nor be deceived.

One nation.
Amen.

Dean Blunt’s Babyfather drop *419* mixtape

News

by MR P · November 25, 2016

Dean Blunt’s got a surprise for us on Black Friday. It’s a Babyfather mixtape called *419*, and it features 14 tracks, some of which have been previewed briefly (like the now-classic “SKYWALKER freestyle”) before leaving a trail of broken embeds and dead links.

The mixtape comes on the heels of Blunt's recent collaborations with GAIKA and Yung Lean, and it marks Babyfather's third major release of 2016, including *Platinum Tears* and their debut album, *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow* (which is out now on Hyperdub).
Grab *419* here while you can.

419 tracklist:

01. HUNT
02. 10_10 Freestyle
03. 419 / NERVOUS freestyle
04. BB
05. Bubble
06. Fall Back
07. LOOKIN remix (ft. Triumph Allah, DJ Escrow)
08. Freedom Dub
09. PRESSURE
10. FOR SHAKILUS
11. Snakeman freestyle
12. SKYWALKER
13. Penelope freestyle
14. LEFT EYE ft. GAIKA

~~~~~ ALBUM REVIEW ~~~~

Babyfather

419

[Self-Released; 2016]

by S. DAVID

STYLES: abandoned industry, dub

OTHERS: Mary J. Blige

American cities have never had walls, only towers — our national narrative far too immature to have witnessed the elitist grandeur of a pre-Ringstrasse Vienna or even the fortifications of medieval Paris. And so the buildings became the walls. These latter-day zoning loci were and are a primary object for planned association, by which some might necessarily be separated from others.

Just give 'im your fone!"

Although largely deprecated by the parlance of our times, the term "inner city" is painfully evocative. A presentation and critique of aesthetic decay, the inner city denotes a bygone Eden, "*to' up from the flo' up,"* haves and other halves separated by the painterly red lines of a sprawling exurban mote. And yet it is a cop-out's cop-out. "Inner city" further defines a fate-sealed central drama, one plagued by a constant coercion, by which paranoia is a low bar and counter-surveillance major key. Parties are, to a condescending, spectatorly chagrin, prone to violence.

The term itself, then, connotes a shift of revolutionary, participatory onus onto an unreceptive and unable peer. Its use is ignorant and only inflammatory.

YEAH, FOUR ONE NINE

> SECTION OF NIGERIAN LAW WHICH COVERS FRAUD. OFTEN CALLED A NIGERIAN 419 SCAM BECAUSE THE EMAIL SCAM PROMISING A PERCENTAGE OF THE CASH IF YOU HELP MOVE MONEY OUTTA THE COUNTRY ORIGINATED IN NIGERIA. MANY SCAMMERS ARE POOR AND SO MUST USE KEYBOARDS WITH THE CAPS LOCK KEY PERMANENTLY JAMMED DOWN.

"*In the city, in the city, in the city / It ain't pretty, it ain't pretty, it ain't pretty."*

419 gives voice to the plaintive, signifyin' cries and whispers of those left to the forgotten agora: scattered, jigsaw lives waiting to be put back together again, only to fall apart to be put back together again to fall apart. A couple is jacked, a Blackberry stolen. A "sneaky friend" is the source of complaint. "*Families are always rising and falling in America,"* said no one.
But 419's setting is not New York City or L.A. or even — though Blunt *et al.* mostly hail from the UK — London, really. Rather, this series of 14 tracks, many of which were culled from the scattered handful of SoundCloud releases Blunt has dropped over the past year, presents the narrative of *every* global city's underbelly, that of the post-adolescent entrepreneur, that yung blud whose desire for survival and success outweighs any ethical predisposition. The mixtape heavily speaks the patois of the Nigerian and Carib diaspora. "*Had to sell the yo-yo to get fru, doe."* It doesn't always make immediate sense, but what does? A stoned Blunt's vo-coded ego forgets the most cardinal of the 10 crack — in this case, dro; *what is it, '96?* — commandments.

And, speaking of weed, there are a lot of references to weed. I know it's par for the course, but this is a lot of weed. Case in point: "*Smoke that green every hour."*

"*Car ain't got no roof / Feds ain't got no proof."*

BUBBLE-WRAP

Such is the external appearance. More than that, though: a foreign, suspect sensuality, one impermeable to the suburban gaze, pervades this realm of magnetic tape. "*If she's really good, link her two times."* A

rump-shaking, full-belted Nicki is quoted early on — amid dancing, mesmerized piano stabs — on the second track alone. It's a tough act to follow, but it's topped by a full-track Blige sample several licks down. A ur-trap low-end solo signals the end of an anguished rallying cry — "*HANDS UP IF U WANT 2 DIE* — and for every sex scene, there's a similar, equal, and opposite ascetic impulse. "*Tell the girls in the front/ Turn Rihanna off."* This rejection of the female, the physical — a monastic, finger-pointing gesture — is one of many similar ethical and aesthetical choices. "*Everybody in the club/ Everybody's praying."*

It's performative at best: we all know Blunt, like every great artist, is full of shit at times, but even *that's* hardly the point, especially when shit bangs this hard.

♫♪ Dean Blunt - "Benidorm"

WATCH

by MR P · November 28, 2016

After recently dropping a new Babyfather mix (which is also streaming here), Dean Blunt is refocusing on his solo music with a new video. It's for a track called "Benidorm," which was previewed earlier this year before being swiftly taken down in typical Bluntian fashion. The 7-minute song is the B-side to a previously announced 7-inch, with "Keroscene" on the other. Who knows if/when it'll be available.

Blunt also notes that the song is not on *Black Metal 2*, which is also a great way of announcing that there *is* a *Black Metal 2* on the way. Maybe. The first installment was released in 2014, and it was our #1 album of the year.

Bleep is selling a Babyfather weed grinder to launch Advent 2016

News

by MR P · December 1, 2016

So you just bought a Babyfather weed grinder as part of Bleep's Advent 2016 special, and don't know how to use it? Well, don't worry: we're here to teach you how to properly use your new Babyfather weed grinder.

Step 1

• Turn on *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow*.
• Open the cap on your grinder.
• Take your marijuana and break it into small pieces so you can evenly spread it on the grinder.

Step 2

• Put your little pieces of marijuana into the grinder teeth.
• Do not overfill the top chamber or it will not be as good as it would've been if you grind small amounts each time.
• Do not place it on the center of the teeth or it will not lock the cap.
• Turn the grinder upside down so that large bulks won't go to the top chamber.
• Place a coin in the compartment on top of the kief; this prevents the kief from clogging up the compartment.

Step 3

• Put the cap back on and now you're ready to start grinding. Rotate the cap to grind the pieces; give it a few turns side to side.
• Ground herbs will go through the top chamber and stay stored on the screen in the bottom chamber. If there are none in both chambers, twist the cap a few more turns again.
• When grinding, twisting feels a little hard, but soon it will become much easier, as if you're grinding nothing; this means that you are done grinding.

Step 4

• Once you are done, remove the upper two chambers. Now you can remove the ground up pieces in the top and bottom chambers, and now they are ready to be hand-rolled into joints and smoked.
• Herbs that a ground to an extremely fine powder will go to the bottom chamber where it is stored.

Extra Tips on How to Use Your Babyfather Weed Grinder

• Turn the grinder upside down for better results.
• For 30 minutes, put the grinder in the freezer so that the next batch is easier to scrape off.
• Put a coin in the center of the grinder chamber on top of the pieces or marijuana to prevent clogging.

Use while listening to *BBF* "to help ease the pain of everyday life."

2016 Favorite Music Releases

01

Babyfather

BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow

[Hyperdub]

"*You hear the sirens, yeah? The sirens is a real ting. Man hear the sirens every fucking night. Man's tryna do my ting, and I hear the fucking sirens."*
– DJ Escrow, "Stealth"

There are many ways to think about the works of Dean Blunt, and most of them are probably wrong. Yet it's not right to say that Babyfather's *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow* resists interpretation; such a turn defensively — nah, aggressively — presupposes an antagonistic relationship to audience. But there is undeniably a waxing and waning proximity of relations between the referential and gestural eyelets that materialize in the Blunt matrix; and, by proxy, there is a constant recalibration with regard to audience. Remember how we (non-Russians) were never even supposed to hear *Stone Island*? Blunt's sonics are strategies as much as they art. Non-allegorical strategies for real living.

And so while *BBF*'s environs were harsh, hostile, toxic, Blunt enunciated, calm: "*Don't panic."* Quintessentially himself, he explained nothing. The very much not-unreal DJ Escrow, by contrast, explained everything, in iterative arcs imploring realness, kernels of positive embodiment in an inwardly weaponized soundscape. His album-spanning libretto was all motivation, empowerment, unity, and therapy. In un-relief amidst *BBF*'s lack of foreground or background, it was the way things really were. It is the way things really are.

"*Don't panic."* We woke up on the 4th day of 2016 to another one: the sound of dissociative gas flooding a metal chamber. The harsh undeniability of what gets known during the comedown. Granular jet engine noise, the sirens, dead fashion designers, betrayal, 20 bands: things you can't ignore. "*Get these white girls out of my home."* We were *shook*. It was a jarring real thing, a pressurized slab of being.

Babyfather didn't offer a condolence or eulogy, commentary or satire; it didn't evoke or hold a mirror to the world. *BBF* was reality emerging at the inchoate contours of this world, at the limits of a body: "*What you gonna do when life gets long?"* Another one: a compressed constellation of prismatic contexts, rigged with security systems and alarms, embedded surveillance channels, and obfuscated references saluting one another and chatting shit, in teeming awareness of an infiltration threat. Still, true strength emerged with the refusal of dichotomy or dialectic. Babyfather sprayed bars of knowledge, less as a separate awareness, more as part of a substance.
As our fearless leader Mr P posed in his exhaustive review of *BBF*, maybe we were the aggressors when we suggested, on forums and in reviews, that Blunt was trolling us with his bodyguards, his conspicuous absence, his supposed "enigmatic" quality. We'd stumbled into his codified, platinum-gilded matrix of thought and lashed out, anxious and overwrought, that we were trapped in the grid, that the landscape was untenable, the sirens too shrill. Again: "Don't panic." *BBF* was not an exercise simulating the outer limits of hypernormalization. It was 2016 en plein air, unadorned. This is really how it is. –NICK HENDERSON

2017

Dean Blunt's Babyfather project drops new mixtape *Cypher*

News
by MR P · April 20, 2017

Anotha' one!

After topping our 2016 list with *BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow*, Dean Blunt's Babyfather project has dropped a new mixtape. This one's titled *Cypher* and arrives as a one-track WAV file, with the link pasted in the description of a YouTube video. Love it. (Makes us feel pretty great about not trying too hard!)

Cypher follow last year's *419* mixtape and last week's Blue Iverson project.

Download *Cypher* via Mediafire here and/or stream below.

~~~~~ ALBUM REVIEW ~~~~

Babyfather

Cypher

[Self-Released; 2017]

Hype Williams

by S. DAVID

STYLES: backmasked trash, narcosub, noise
OTHERS: Dean Blunt, Blue Iverson,

i saw the best producers of my generation elevated by stuttering hi-hats, molly, and percocets, snarking, hysterical, faded,
dragging themselves out the bando, looking for another snare hit…
angel-faced ******* burning for the ancient gyration […]
who privilege and top-buns and dilated-eyed and high sat up freak folking
in the so-called originary darkness of africa
across the tops of cities contemplating company flow,
who bared their gains to heaven under the orange line and saw
djinn swaggering in anacostia illuminated,

At 2:50am: “He’s a terror.”

> RECORDED VOICE MESSAGE: Sunday, June 12th, 2016. The time 2:03 a.m.
> OPERATOR: Emergency 911. This is Joe on a recorded line. Hello, can anybody hear me? Hello? Sir, can you hear me? Hello? Sir, can you hear me?

.dnuos gnitluser eht gniyojne ,sdrawkcab “niaR” deyalp eh nehw hgih saw nonneL nhoJ taht dias s’tI .atamehcs orez htiw gniretsiger ,egami ron dnuos a sekam rehtien tI .agnirym eht ssorca rettulf edahs fo spilc elttil ,elbazingocer ecno ta dna etèrcnoc ylgnimeeS .nwonknu eht ,yranigiro eht ta serutseg ,euqinhcet lacisum a sa ,gniksamkcaB

> Why will Paulinus become Palinarus if he pisses again? The answer lies not only in the fact that the two names are virtually anagrammatic echoes of each other, nor only in the threatening allusion to Aeneas’ pilot, who met his death by going overboard.

That’ll never sell. Withering self-criticisms — your own inner abattoir.

Dean Blunt and Joanne Robertson release album called *Wahalla*

News

by MR P · May 8, 2017

Another day, another Dean Blunt story on Tiny Mix Tapes. <3

Tonight, we have one for the heads, as Dean Blunt just dropped an album made in collaboration with folk artist (and frequent Blunt collaborator) Joanne Robertson. Titled *Wahalla*, the eight-track release was apparently recorded in 2014, which would place it sometime around Blunt’s *Black Metal* and *Skin Fade* releases (both of which also saw the two paired together), as well as Robertson’s early 2015 album, *Black Moon Days*.

In typical Blunt fashion (at least as of late), *Wahalla* was released via a Mediafire/YouTube combo. Stream the album below, and download the whole thing here. PSA #1: while the album release isn’t marked as limited, I’d grab it ASAP just in case. PSA #2: while you’re at it, grab a UK cheese strain, too.

Tracklist:

01. X
02. PUSHER
03. MASS APPEAL
04. VIPER
05. PARO
06. HAD MY GUARD UP 2 U (SINCE ‘92)
07. TRIPLE BEAM
08. FUCKBOY ANTHEM

Dean Blunt to debut an opera called *Inna*, music by Mica Levi

News

by MR P · October 11, 2017

Grab your cocktail dress and the fattest blunt you can find, dear readers, because Dean Blunt is taking us out on a night at the opera. Earlier today, Hyperdub announced that the London artist has written and directed an opera called *Inna*. The work will premiere October 27 and 28 at the ICA London, and features music by Mica Levi (Micachu), who most notably worked with Dean Blunt on a track off Babyfather's *BBF* album (our favorite release of 2016).

Here's a description of the opera via ICA's website:

> Cause anything's possible
> Oh anything is possible

Inna follows other theater works by Dean Blunt, such as 2012's *The Narcissist*; 2013's *Lord Knows*, *Lausanne*, and *I'm Just Passin Thru To Show Some Love*; and 2014's *Urban*. It also continues Dean Blunt's general prolificacy, which this year alone has already gifted us a new album (as Blue Iverson), mixtape (with Babyfather), and video (for Actress).

Meanwhile, Mica Levi's work here follows her film scores for *Jackie* and *Under the Skin*, the latter of which was our favorite film of 2014.

Get tickets for *Inna* here, and listen to a preview of Levi's music below.

2018

Dean Blunt shares new release titled *BOOKEY*

News

by MR P · April 3, 2018

With chunky, distorted guitar and a stadium-ready drum beat, Dean Blunt enters 2018 with a scrappy, three-track release titled *BOOKEY*. Its rollout, of course, was curious: the instrumental first track, "BOOKEY 1," was uploaded yesterday under a different title ("STUNNERS"), but in typical Bluntian fashion, it was just as swiftly taken down. And, since we're all clamoring for any Blunt-related scraps thrown our way, it's also worth noting that yesterday's upload included the following rare, limited-edition text, which is not included in the *BOOKEY* version:

> Soul on Fire
> SS18
> World Music

The "Soul on Fire" text is especially interesting, because Blunt briefly had a 30-minute track of the same name on YouTube just last week. (It's gone now, but we have a mirrored version embedded below.) While the texts accompanying the tracks on *BOOKEY* aren't as RARE and COLLECTIBLE, they do reveal this release's guest vocalists, which include Lasse on "BOOKEY 2" and Nina on "BOOKEY 3," the latter of whom released the same track a couple weeks ago on her SoundCloud. Obviously nothing lasts forever in Blunt's world, so stream *BOOKEY* and "Soul on Fire" below while you can. I guarantee that they'll vanish sometime between now and the future.

Dean Blunt shares *Muggy Vol. 1* compilation for his World Music label

News

by MR P · August 28, 2018

Dean Blunt, international man of mystery/recent A$AP Rocky collaborator/human being, has shared a compilation from his label World Music. It's titled *Muggy Vol. 1* and features nine short tracks of sludgy blues-inflected psych cuts and exploratory rock interludes, all draped in Bluntian aesthetics (crude instrumentation, amorphous structures, claustrophobic synths, incongruous sampling, etc.). Each track has a title, but there are no artist attributions. It'll take some guesswork to figure it all out, if that's important to you. I have my guesses (especially that "dum draco" bassist), but there *must* be a reason why there isn't an artist list, right?

Muggy Vol. 1 can be streamed below and downloaded here for what I assume will be a limited amount of time.

Dean Blunt collaborates with A$AP Rocky and Mica Levi on new album *Soul on Fire*, *Black Metal 2* on the way

News

by MR P · September 19, 2018

Dean Blunt, the (chosen) one and only, makes his return with *Soul on Fire*, which — ALERT — is *not* the same *Soul on Fire* mirrored here. In contrast to that DMX/Metallica composite, the new *Soul on Fire* features nine melloncollie tracks, with contributions from A$AP Rocky, Mica Levi, Lady T, Poison Anna, and Jockstrap.

Meanwhile, the long-anticipated *Black Metal 2* has been formally announced and is "coming soon" on Rough Trade. The release will act as the follow-up to our #1 album of 2014 — no big deal.

Soul on Fire follows Blunt's World Music compilation, his *Inna* opera with Mica Levi, his work on A$AP Rocky's new album *Testing*, and his other solo release of the year, *BOOKEY*.

You know what time it is. Download *Soul on Fire* here (hurry) and/or stream it down below.

Soul on Fire tracklist:

01. CHANCER (FT A$AP ROCKY)
02. ORANGE SODA
03. NBA
04. CRUSHED
05. PETTY WAP
06. White Grrrl Wasted
07. A/X (FT LADY T)
08. CIAO 2001
09. BEEFA (FT POISON ANNA)

2010s: Favorite 100 Music Releases of the Decade

26

Dean Blunt

The Redeemer

[Hippos in Tanks; 2013]

The teachings of the Catholic church oppose a set of cardinal sins and virtues. Lust and Chastity, Wrath and Patience, Envy and Gratitude. These tuples represent archetypal conducts and dispositions, behaviors to avoid and pursue. Atonement is the bridge between redemption and sin. One can identify many such sins in Dean Blunt's *The Narcissist II*: "XXX," "And I'll show u heaven if u let me," "I just need a bitch to lay…" Were there traces of reparation and penance in *The Redeemer*? Were those two albums a diptych more than entries in a tetralogy? Did a transparent attempt at *psychomachia* get mistaken for the heartbroken balladry of a rascal whose latest punt was to wear his heart on his sleeve?

Starting with the praying hands that adorned the cover, the signs were all there. "The Walls of Jericho," "Seven Seals of Affirmation," the Meridian Demon, "God forsake us now"… The clarity in the forms, a rupture with the lo-fi fuzziness of Hype Williams, also signified the opposition. Yet, not even the centrality of the longing for a lost love was new. Behold Dante traversing the circles of Hell to meet with Beatrice. Songs like "Need to let u go" or "Papi" seemed to frame a lover who understood he fucked up, as he praised what was inevitably lost. So much is clear. Tellingly, acoustic guitars and warm synths wrap the appearance of the female voice in the album. Blunt invited two female collaborators: one from the past to sing about the need to wake up and let go, as if calling from the netherworld; the other, present in Blunt's successive work, who appeared rooted in immediacy, to talk about minutes and a very material home. Indeed, from the get-go, *The Redeemer* was billed as a "relationship study." Was that the perverse rug-pulling? An allegory so blunt and evident by design? Maybe. Such is the paradox of an album that invites tropological interpretation while grinning from behind a fogged crystal. –JRODRIGUEZ6

11

Babyfather

BBF Hosted by DJ Escrow

[Hyperdub; 2016]

Regardless of how you might feel about the current state of intercultural dialogue and mutual respect in the world, there is no question that we urgently require more unity. We need unity, not just in our neighborhoods, our broader communities, and our districts, not just across our nations or even our continents; we need unity as a *species*. This is arguably more imperative now than it ever has been in the past; we are connected before we are even born, plugged into a network before we even learn how to walk; we need to be able to navigate it in the same way and with the same level of dexterity of our day-to-day life in the physical world. But at a time when unity has never felt so necessary, it has also never been so fractured and distant.

BBF was the soundtrack to a transition, to a moment in the history of humankind that witnessed a shift in the way that we relate to people around us and away from us, people we have never met and people who we know intimately, people who we care about and people who will never know us by anything other than an internet pseudonym. But these tracks did more than document that transition. They channeled the before and the after, the corrupted relations that exist between postcodes and the potential unity that exists across continents, all on a radio station broadcast in London — a melting pot of vibrant multicultures, community engagement, hate-riddled phobia, and indiscriminate violence. Where is that unity, and what does it look like? Where is the pride that we should all feel, not about being from a place, but about instinctively respecting each other, regardless of who we might be or where we might be from?

BBF was assembled so fervently and so accurately that it captured a fracture across both the entire planet and the entire mind of an individual reflecting on how they fit into it all. The album was painstakingly curated by an artist so desperately in touch with the multidimensional realities around him that it also served as a prediction, at once filled with both a giddying sense of optimism and a desperately bleak amplification of despair. –BIRKUT

02

Dean Blunt and Inga Copeland

Black Is Beautiful

[Hyperdub; 2012]

Black Is Beautiful, one of a few crests in the imposing Hype Williams wave of the 2010s, was recorded and released in a year of uncertain but likely apocalypse, and when held together in the mind on a list like this, it still judders and quakes with the possibility. Somewhere between career culmination and business as usual, Dean and Inga and co.'s final major offering maintained their day 1 promise of a certain form of honesty-if-nothing-else (a bizarre claim from such skilled and relentless mythmakers, but for fans of the group the very essence of what could be delivered), this time possessing a strangely charged sense of purpose, a series of movements in crisis that squeezed into any number of musical molds of the day while only ever sounding like themselves — whatever that was — "in-betweenness" somehow honed to a fine point.

The obvious stunners were the result of a locked-in and keyed-up pop sensibility in full flower, production miracles made more so in their permanent "demo" form, but the rest of the album could almost be tasted with enough concentration — interludes that reintroduced themselves on repeat listens as main tracks, exploratory and unpredictable to the very next note even as they traced the edge of recognizability; melodies so curious that the instruments producing them quickly slid out of mental view, only sub-bass and sensation left in deep (red) focus. There was a constant profundity to it all, even sometimes a profound stupidity (try to make it through "14's" chicken-dance dead end with a straight face). Fairly new genres developments were "played," like they'd already been drained by time, now just rows of atmospheres to rent and remodel. "History [was] inhaled and exhaled," more than an accretion of what came before, neither in thrall to the past nor ignorant of its lasting afterimage, only a generously employed soft focus keeping everything from turning upside down.

Much has been made of Dean and Inga's endless trapdoors and obfuscation; not nearly enough has been written about the rarity of their work ethic, their real-time risk-taking, their determination not to close themselves off from the world. In doing so, they commanded an unmatched emotionalism and intuition, fostering a kind of dignity in chaos. That music like *Black Is Beautiful* exists at all is a serious blessing. –SQUEO